

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. XII.—No. 41.]

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1892.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

M. RENAN.

THE death of M. Joseph Ernest Renan leaves a gap in the front rank of European Freethinkers. A Frenchman of Frenchmen, his learning, his versatility, and his wonderful powers of expression have made for him, for upwards of thirty years, a European reputation. Indeed, since the eventful year '48, when he gained the Volney prize for a work on the Semitic Languages, he has been recognised as a genius of no common order. To a capacity for learned research he united a sympathy and imagination which left few subjects untouched, and, to use Johnson's eulogium on Goldsmith, touched nothing he did not adorn. It is with his work as a Freethinker, of course, that we are concerned. But this was the main work of his life. From his earliest study, *The Future of Science*, one of the latest published of his works, to his just completed *History of the People of Israel*, he has shown himself as ardent in the pursuit of truth as felicitous in its expression.

Like many other foreign Freethinkers, M. Renan had an ecclesiastical education. He was intended for the Church, and its training was so deep, it left such sympathy, not only for the cloister, but for the sentimental parts of religion, with a certain proclivity to sentiment and unction, that some of the more advanced Freethinkers, like Prosper Mérimée, regarded him as a priest spoiled. His works were almost as strongly criticised from the Freethought camp by the young bloods of *La Pensée Nouvelle* as by the orthodox theologians. In this respect he resembled Matthew Arnold, but, like Arnold, he carried Freethought into quarters where the bolder and more advanced spirits could not penetrate. He held much in common with the English apostle of culture, sweetness and light, who was but two months his senior. An interesting and instructive parallel might be drawn between them. For range, depth, and brilliancy, the palm must be given to the Frenchman, though on the ground of poetic effort as well as mere literary criticism Arnold would hold his own. They had a certain delicacy and imaginativeness, as well as literary dexterity in common. Like Arnold, Renan was a link "between two worlds—one dead, the other powerless to be born"; and, like him, all his aims were in the direction of liberty and light. We do not altogether regret his priestly training, since this kept his mind in play around the most serious problems, and made him give that needed attention to the work of clearing the ground of theological misconceptions. Like "George Eliot," he arrived at Freethought through a study of Christian history and Christian evidences. My faith, he says, was destroyed, not by metaphysics nor philosophy, but by historical criticism. When he gave up all thought of the black craft, he naturally took to teaching. For a long while he remained poor. Napoleon III. refused to ratify his appointment as professor of Hebrew in the College of France on account of his heresy. Of his work as a philologist, this is not the place to speak. His most popular work in this direction, an

early study of *The Origin of Language*, shows still the prevalence of ecclesiastical ideas and is really out of date. His work on *Averroës and Averroïsme* (1852) is an important and learned study of the early history of Freethought in Europe.

But his chief work is his comprehensive *History of Christian Origins*, in eight vols., '63-'83; the first volume of which, the noted *Vie de Jésus*, created a great sensation on its first appearance, when the Pope did not disdain to attack him personally as "a French blasphemer." The work of Renan, in our judgment, is a less solid performance than that of Strauss. The German *Life of Jesus* is a thorough, serious, critical study; the Frenchman's a sentimental romance, in which he accepts and rejects in accordance rather with his own artistic and intellectual preferences than with any actual evidence. His gentle Gallic Jesus, "meek and mild," is as much a creation of fancy as the Logos of John. Indeed, the whole eight volumes, though containing many able suggestions and much insight and good criticism, is really a work of historical reconstruction from the slightest materials, and, like all such work, is necessarily largely a work of imagination. That he should make so much out of so little indeed speaks for a surprising literary faculty. But there was more than literary ability in M. Renan, or rather this sprang from and was the outcome of a wide culture and many-sided sympathy. Insight needs sympathy, needs imagination, and the ready play of feeling which the Frenchman had ever at command. But he let these shine so constantly that his subjects are never seen in the native, bald simplicity, or ugliness, of fact, but with all the elegant graces and adornments a skilled artist can bestow upon them. In dealing with a contemplative spirit like Marcus Aurelius, Spinoza, or Job, he is seen at his highest; but for a popular, plain, and even coarse singer of the people, like Béranger, he had no appreciation. It is in his shorter essays, such as his *Studies of Religious History* and his *Philosophical Dialogues and Fragments*, that some of his most characteristic traits appear. He understood, as few outsiders understand, the spirit of devotion which has given Catholicism its strength. Amid all his scepticism he remained "un Breton bretonnant," a Celt of Celts, with a generous, enthusiastic temperament and a warm side towards all that kindled emotion. It is for this reason he was, and will remain, one of the best interpreters of Freethought to religious people. He saw the objects of faith not simply in the dry light of the intellect, but in the prismatic hues of human feelings and human interests. He discarded dogmas and supernatural beliefs, but only dwelt the more on the necessity of right conduct and of cultivating ideal aspiration. A thinker, a critic, and a superb master of style, he was also a philosophic moralist. But his morality was that of nature, not that of the churches. With little faith, and but moderate hope, he had abundant charity. A generous, high-minded sympathy showed he was not only a scholar, but emphatically, and before all, a man.

J. M. WHEELER.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY AND THE BIBLE.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY has recently published a very valuable volume, with the title of *Essays on some Controverted Questions*. The book, which contains his principal contributions to the magazine press during the last seven years, is an important addition to Freethought literature and a thorough refutation of orthodox pretensions. The learned writer deals exhaustively with a variety of theological questions, and urges with great force arguments based upon modern investigation. The different topics considered are presented in the newest light, and illuminated with the unrivalled knowledge which Professor Huxley possesses in his own special department of science. Moreover, he evinces a profound knowledge of the logical analysis of difficult problems; his method of treatment, and even his phraseology, being strikingly original and singularly powerful.

The unsatisfactory position taken by the leaders of the Protestant reformation towards the Bible is indicated with great perspicuity. Referring to their notions of the supernatural origin and infallible authority of the Bible, the Professor says: "They could not afford to entertain any doubt about these points since the infallible Bible was the fulcrum of the lever with which they were endeavoring to upset the chair of St. Peter." He sums up the results of their labors as being "a change of masters. From being the slave of the Papacy the intellect was to become the serf of the Bible." When the Reformers obtained and conceded "the right of private judgment," the rationalistic theologians soon applied it, and "the despotism of the Bible was rapidly converted into an extremely limited monarchy." The Protestant idea of Bible infallibility is shown to be utterly fallacious. "The dogma of the infallibility of the Bible is no more self-evident than is that of the infallibility of the Pope. If the former is held by faith then the latter may be. If the latter is to be accepted, or rejected, by private judgment why not the former?" This is, we think, the only consistent view to take. Once grant the right of private judgment, and who has the authority to limit its exercise? Herein the Protestant Reformers were inconsistent, inasmuch as they denied to others the same right that they had claimed for themselves. Freethought teaches that when once the portals to free inquiry are opened, no one has authority to fetter progress within its domain. As Professor Huxley says, "the Protestant principle contained within itself the germs of the destruction of the finality which the Lutheran, Calvinistic, and other Protestant Churches fondly imagined they had reached. . . . If the private judgment of Luther might legitimately conclude that the epistle of James was contemptible, while the epistles of Paul contained the very essence of Christianity, it must be permissible for some other private judgment, on as good or as bad grounds, to reverse these conclusions."

Of course it is well known that Professor Huxley entirely rejects the Bible theory of Creation as not being based on fact; the story of the Deluge, he says, is proved by physical criticism never to have occurred. "Thus, far from confirming the account in Genesis, the results of modern science, so far as they go, are in principle, as in detail, hopelessly discordant with it." Here an important issue is raised for the consideration of orthodox believers. If the history of the Creation and Deluge stories is disposed of by natural science, what historical credit can be given to the story of Eve and the Fall of Man? "And if these are to lose all historical worth, what becomes of the infallibility of those who, according to the later scriptures, have accepted them, argued from them, and stated far-reaching dogmatic conclusions upon their historical accuracy? . . . If God did not

walk in the Garden of Eden, how can we be assured that he spoke from Sinai?" This is a point that we have frequently urged, as it presents an insurmountable objection to popular orthodoxy. Undoubtedly the historical value of Christianity depends upon the veracity of many statements found in the Old Testament. If these are proved unreliable, it must necessarily undermine the truth of the contents of the New Testament in proportion as the statements of the two books are related to each other. The evidence for the Gadarene miracle is proved to be "altogether worthless." But the evidence in its favor "is as good as that for any other," which is no good at all.

In referring to the relation of the Bible to Democracy, Professor Huxley makes the following extraordinary allegations. While he regards both the Old and New Testaments as a mere human production, fallible in their teachings and misleading in their statements, he says: "The Bible has been the *Magna Charta* of the poor and oppressed. . . . Assuredly the Bible talks no trash about the rights of Man." Now we take a decided exception to both these statements. If the term "trash" is intended as a slur upon the rights of man, its use was unworthy of the great writer, for without such rights the world would present a sorry spectacle. The word "trash" signifies that which is worthless, and assuredly "the Bible talks" much that is worthless in reference to such rights. In fact, it may be fairly questioned if the political and social rights of the community, as they are understood to-day, could be found in this alleged charter. The principle upon which all modern reforms are based is the very opposite to the cardinal teachings of the Bible, which is never now appealed to with a view of deciding the right of either political, social, or scientific questions. The truth is that the Bible has been the text-book of the tyrant, the slave-holder, and the political and theological oppressors of the world. From it these men have sought to justify their conduct in treating the people as if they were on a level with the quadrupeds. When the Bible was accepted as an absolute authority, the majority of the English people were denied their rights and kept in a degraded condition. Freedom they knew not, and to justice they were strangers. We do not deny that portions of the Bible have been quoted as favoring liberty, but we do allege that it has been a potent weapon employed by the priests and governing classes to deprive the nation of its legitimate rights, and that numerous passages could be cited from its pages in justification of the worst kind of despotism that ever crushed human freedom or encouraged inhuman tyranny. The whole system of slavery as sanctioned in the Old Testament, and not condemned in the New, is a cruel and relentless blight upon the first and grandest right of life—liberty. In the same book freedom of worship is prohibited, and the very unbelief which Prof. Huxley indulges in so extensively is said to have been punished with death. The same principle applies to the New Testament, where liberty of thought is denied; obedience of servants, even to bad masters, enjoined; submission to the "powers that be" enforced; and the rights of woman are not allowed. The charter of the Bible means a disregard of this world, subjection to "them that have the rule over you," and a humiliating contentment under wrong. It means also "Labor not for the bread which perisheth"; "Let every man abide in the calling wherein he was called"; "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake"; "Is any among you sick? let him pray"; "What things so ever ye desire when ye pray, believe and ye shall receive them"; "Resist not evil"; "Avoid riches and regard poverty as a blessing"; "Mortify your members which are on the earth"; "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." This is a charter of poverty.

stricken despair, not one of self-reliance or heroic battling with the impediments to a progressive state of society.

Professor Huxley has done good service in showing that the Bible is both scientifically and historically unreliable; but we regret to find that he claims for it a fictitious authority upon the rights of man. This is playing into the hands of the very people against whose absurd biblical notions he has so ably written.

CHARLES WATTS.

THE ACT OF GOD.

A CURIOUS litigation has just been decided at the Spalding county-court. The Great Northern Railway was sued for damages by a farmer, who had sent a quantity of potatoes to London shortly before Christmas, which were not delivered for nearly ten days, and were then found to be spoiled by the frost. The Company's defence was that a dense fog prevailed during the Christmas week, and disorganised the traffic; that everything was done to facilitate the transit of goods; and that, as the fog was the act of God, there was no liability for damage by delay. After an hour's deliberation the jury returned a verdict for the defendants, and judgment was given them with costs.

We sincerely pity that Lincolnshire farmer. It is very hard lines to receive only thirteen and fourpence for four tons of potatoes; and harder still to pay the whole of that sum, and a good deal more, for attempting to obtain compensation. The poor man is absolutely without a remedy. The person who delayed and rotted his potatoes is called God, but no one knows where he resides, and it is impossible to serve a summons upon him, even if a court of justice would grant one. God appears to be the chartered libertine of this planet. He destroys what he pleases, and no one is able to make him pay damages.

Christians may call this "blasphemous." But calling names is no argument. Certainly it will not pay for that farmer's potatoes. We fail to see where the blasphemy comes in. An English judge and jury have accepted the Great Northern Railway Company's plea that the fog was the act of God. We simply take our stand upon their verdict and judgment. And we tell the Christians that if God sent the fog—as the judge and jury allow—he has a great deal more to answer for than four tons of rotted potatoes. That terrible fog cost London a gas bill amounting to twenty or thirty thousand pounds. It is impossible to estimate the cost to the community of delayed traffic and suspended business. Hundreds of people were suffocated or otherwise slaughtered. Millions of people were made peevish or brutally ill-tempered, and there was a frightful increase in reckless profanity.

Many persons, doubtless, will say that God did not send the fog. They will assert that it came in the ordinary course of nature. But does nature act independently of God? Is he only responsible for some of the things that happen? And who is responsible for the rest?

Those who still believe in the Devil may conveniently introduce him. It is curious, however, that they never do, except in cases of *moral* evil. Criminal indictments charge prisoners with acting wickedly under the instigation of the Devil. But *physical* evil is ascribed to Jehovah. Bills of lading exonerate shipowners from liability if anything happens to the cargo through "the act of God or the Queen's enemies." Old Nick does not raise storms, stir up volcanoes, stimulate earthquakes, blight crops, or spread pestilence. All those destructive pastimes are effected by his rival. Even cases of sudden death, or death from lightning, are brought in by jurors as "died by the visitation of God." Which seems to show that a visit from God is a certain calamity.

The time will come, of course, when all this nonsense about "the act of God" will disappear. But it will only disappear because real belief in God is dying. While men are sincere Theists they cannot help seeing God in the unexpected and the calamitous. That is how theology began, and that is how it must continue while it has a spark of vitality. But theology declines as knowledge increases. Our dread of the unknown diminishes as we gain command over the forces of nature; that is, our dread of the unknown diminishes as we turn it into the *known*.

"The act of God" is to be frustrated by Science: We cannot prevent storms, but we are growing more able to foresee them. We cannot prevent the angry waves from rising, but we can build ships to defy their fiercest wrath. We cannot prevent mist from ascending in certain conditions of sky and soil, but we can drain low-lying ground, and prevent the mist from being fatally charged with smoke. We cannot abolish the microbes with which our planet swarms, and if we could we should be surrounded with intolerable putrefaction; but we can observe the laws of public and private sanitation, maintain a high state of vitality, and make ourselves practically invulnerable.

Science is the instrument for achieving the triumph of man. Ultimately it will subdue the planet for us, and we shall be able to exclaim with Mr. Swinburne, "Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things." The paradise the theologians dream of will be realised on earth. We shall not abolish death, but we shall make life strong, rich, and glorious, and when death comes it will bring no terror, but rest and peace in the shadow of its wings.

Meanwhile the "act of God" will to some extent survive in the mental life of the multitude. All prayer is based upon this superstition. Those who pray for relief or exemption from storm, famine, or disease; those who pray to be preserved from "battle, murder, and sudden death"; those who pray to be saved from any evil; are all praying against "the act of God." It is God who is sending the mischief, and therefore he is begged to take it away or pass it on to other persons. Hamburg would be grateful to God even if he transferred the cholera to Berlin. Thus do ignorance and selfishness go hand in hand; thus does superstition cloud the intellect and degrade the character. G. W. FOOTE.

BIBLIOLATRY.—The great obstructor of science and civilisation was that the Bible was quoted in sanction of war, crusades against alien religions, murders for witchcraft, divine right of despots, degradation of reason, exaltation of credulity, punishment of opinion, and unbiblical discovery; contempt of human virtues and human nature, and costly ceremonies before an invisible majesty, which, exacted from the means of the people, were virtually the offering of human sacrifices.—*M. D. Conway, "Life of Paine,"* vol. ii., p. 199.

MYTHS AND PARABLES.—I know I was not very young when I entertained no more doubt of the substantial existence of Lazarus and Dives than of John the Baptist and Herod; when the Good Samaritan was as real a personage as any of the Apostles; when I was full of sincerest pity for those poor foolish virgins who had forgotten to trim their lamps, and thought them—in my secret soul—rather hardly treated. This impression of the literal actual truth of the parables I have since met with in many children, and in the uneducated but devout hearers and readers of the Bible; and I remember that when I once tried to explain to a good old woman the proper meaning of the word parable, and that the story of the Prodigal Son was not a fact, she was scandalised—she was quite sure that Jesus would never have told anything to his disciples that was not true. Thus she settled the matter in her own mind, and I thought it best to leave it there undisturbed.—*Mrs. Jameson, "History of Our Lord in Art,"* vol. i., p. 375.

WILD FLOWERS OF FREETHOUGHT.

ALTHOUGH the great conflict between Freethought and Religion is assuming larger and larger proportions in our towns, the exigencies of the warfare have necessarily left the villages to a great extent untouched; yet, paradoxical as it may seem, a few days' stay in a village swamped with religion may show the observer that the mind of the average Englishman is ripening fast from the greenness of religious observance.

To my mind a freethinking villager is a most interesting subject, though he is a commoner phenomenon than is often supposed. An ordinary figure enough to look at, he is attended by many of the attributes of the heroic. He must be observant, intelligent, and brave. Observant, in that he notices the great discrepancy between profession and practice; intelligent, since untaught he is able to detect the radical fallacies of his neighbor's religion, and has reasoned himself free from the fetters that bound him; brave, since that in the face of squire, parson, friends and relations, he stands, unbacked by science, higher criticism, or other help to the town-taught Atheist, and defies fanaticism, priestcraft, and "Almighty God."

He is a sign of the times in this way. Unless religion and religious formulas were fast losing hold on the minds of the people he could not possibly exist; and since the soil begins spontaneously to produce good corn, what may we not expect when the seed of Freethought gets well sown?

There are two Atheists in the village of H——, there may be more; I mean there are two outspoken Freethinkers of the type I have mentioned above. There is no flippancy about their unbelief; flippancy would make them Christians. They have no lectures to encourage them; no basis of science on which to fall back. Perceiving, when but youths, that the horrible doctrine of hell must be a lie; and that a creed that taught one lie among other things unprovable could not be God's truth, they cast aside the whole *cloaca* as unworthy sane men's worship. Henceforward—for the breaking of the ties happened some years ago—they two stood armed with reason against a village, or, as they thought, against the world.

Then they bound themselves by a mutual promise that, whenever one was sick and likely to die, the other should stay continually by his bedside until he recovered or was dead—to hear, if need be, a warning from the threshold of "the undiscovered country"; at any rate, to exclude the chance of officious religion to asperse the character of the dying one by publishing a false recantation.

When I met one of these brave men a week ago and heard the story of his struggles, I mentally exclaimed, in the much-quoted lines from Gray's *Elegy*:

Fall many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark, unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air;

determining, however, that in this case the sweetness should not be wasted altogether, but that the knowledge of the spontaneous growth of two wild flowers of Freethought should be reported where it would be appreciated.

RON MAHON.

While the *Age of Reason* is this, in an aspect, the product of its time, the renewal of an old siege—begun far back indeed as Celsus—its intellectual originality is none the less remarkable. Paine is more complete master of the comparative method than Tindal in his *Christianity as Old as Creation*. In his studies of "Christian mythology" (his phrase), one is surprised by anticipations of Baur and Strauss. These are all the more striking by reason of his homely illustrations.—*M. D. Conway, "Life of Thomas Paine,"* vol. ii., p. 195.

PRAYING FOR THE CHURCH CONGRESS.

THE Parsons' Palaver is now sitting at Folkestone. Its proceedings opened on Tuesday, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The sky-pilots are combining business with pleasure. The Congress gives them an occasion for a fine holiday without "the missis and the kids."

Many of these Church Congresses have been held before. Whether they have done any good is a debateable question. This at least is certain—the good is not very apparent.

Prior to this Congress the Archbishop of Canterbury ordered prayers to be offered for its success. We shall therefore watch its proceedings with great interest, to see if the Lord endows its members with "grace, wisdom, and understanding." They certainly want those gifts very badly.

If the Archbishop of Canterbury really thinks that prayer has any efficacy, he should order the clergy to pray for something more tangible—and, in the opinion of most people, more useful. There is the cholera, for instance. Why don't the clergy ask God to sweep it off the face of Europe? Why don't they beg him to relieve the afflicted city of Hamburg? Here is a splendid opportunity for the Church to prove the efficacy of prayer. But the clergy are dumb dogs in the hour of humanity's need. They would scarcely earn a pound a week between them if they were paid according to results.

The Archbishop might reply that his duty is confined to England; that foreign Churches must pray against cholera in foreign countries. But this is a very selfish objection, especially when prayer is so cheap. It only costs a little time and a little extra inflation of the chest; and the man who would not make *that* investment for the good of his kind is only fit to live in Sheol.

There is room, however, for the Archbishop and his clergy to operate in England. Scarlet fever is too active in London. Would it not be better for the Church to ask God to take it away, and spare the lives of many children who are dear to their fathers and mothers, rather than to beg his assistance at the Folkestone Congress? Surely it is as easy for the Lord to banish a fever as to give sense to clergymen. Some people would think it easier.

Prayer seems to be played out. The performance is falling into discredit. It no longer looks well on the Church bills. When the clergy *do* pray for something, they take care it is nothing tangible or practical. They like to pray for what it is difficult to trace. Every one could perceive the vanishing of a fever. It takes a supernatural vision to see the difference in wisdom between one Church Congress and another.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WEST HAM FREETHOUGHT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I wish, through your columns, to disclaim all participation in, or countenance of, the action of the present committee of the West Ham Branch in resolving to sever from the N.S.S., and more than once, when such a thing was mooted, I pointed out that the only method any dissatisfied members could adopt was to resign individually; and when, at a largely attended conference of West Ham Secularists, held on the 11th inst., some speakers indulged in anticipation of the Branch (renamed) existing independently, I then fully explained that the N.S.S. Executive, which brought a Branch into existence, alone had power to dissolve it. My advice was contemptuously ignored, and therefore it was impossible for me to attend a meeting called to consider such an absurd resolution as has been passed.

I may say, I for one still remain a member, and regret my inability at present to take any active part.—Yours, etc.,

E. ANDERSON.

(Late Vice-president and one-time Secretary.)

Sept. 29, 1892.

HARVEST THIMBLERIGGING.

ALMOST wherever one goes in the autumn of the year he meets with large staring placards, posted on the various hoardings in the towns and upon barn doors and public-house shutters in the rural districts, announcing to the public that such or such a whang-doodle *from Teman* (see Habakkuk iii. 3) will preach (D.V.) (*death and vengeance*) the harvest thanksgiving or thimblerrigging sermon, at the close of which there will, of course, be the usual collections made on behalf of the sundry and manifold ecclesiastical needs connected with the laborious back-breaking works of Christianity. Silver will be expected from the gods resorting to the gallery. Shocks of corn, haystacks in miniature, salvers of delicious fruit, gigantic bouquets of the loveliest flowers, elaborate garlands, appropriate texts and mottoes, etc., garnish the altar, communion rails, windows, and walls of provincial parish and other churches; and if godalmity has as keen a scent for these vegetable offerings of the disciples of Cain as he always has had for roast beef and mutton (of which Abel was the patron saint), then he has indeed wonderfully changed his changeless consistency.

One bad harvest time, in order to gather the indispensable haddock of corn, a farmer, W. J. C—— (full name, etc., if challenged) wandered about for four hours in a green cornfield, on a drenching wet day, weeding out solitary stalks that were turning yellow, and trampling down pounds' worth of grain, until he had secured a somewhat presentable half-ripe sheaf of oats. The writer heard him ask what the *blank* they wanted with their *double blanked* harvest festivals, when no harvest had been got or likely to be got at all. The same week the saints of that locality sang "All is safely garnered in"; and one of the choir girls whispered to the writer's daughter, "What a big lie"; while the pig-headed multitude of clodhoppers knew very well that on several of their farms, whole meadows of grass were cut, and the hay, lying abroad, rotting ankle-deep in water. Truly, the British nation are mostly fools, and to cozen them the tuft-hunting sky-pilot points, in times of agricultural depression, to Russia or India; and exhorts them to be thankful that other people's misfortunes are so much greater than theirs, a most invidious consolation—heaping insult upon injury.

If godalmity is to be so fulsomely lauded and beslavered for good harvests and periods of commercial prosperity, then logically he ought to be correspondingly damned for famines, pestilences and general depression of industry. But a sound secular education will render Carlyle's foolish millions less gullible to priestcraft, and they will then sternly refuse to be bamboozled with the plausible orthodox falsehood that we owe everything to God the *Father*: nothing but God the *Sun* will gain their unanimous acceptance as being the one only mainspring of all vegetation, the one great source of spontaneous generation and maintenance of all physical life. Of spiritual life we have no proof. The Bible informs us "The dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward" (Ecc. ix. 5). If God the Father be the great agricultural bummer, why don't "the righteous flourish like the palm tree" (Ps. xcii. 12)? What need is there of sunshine, dew, rain, artificial or farmyard manure? But "the righteous perisheth" (Is. lvii. 1). "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked" (Ecc. ix. 2). The sturdy scientific farmer is far ahead of his pious weak-kneed brother. The one puts his trust in chemical affinities, the other blindly relies upon godheads and trinities. One is willing to speculate half a guinea in the analyses of the different samples of soil to be met with on his farm, and avails himself of the advantages disclosed to him, with corresponding beneficial results; the other nincompoop drops half-a-crown into the begging-box, expecting, "as the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself" (Mark iv. 28), to receive a return of sixty or a hundredfold, and contents himself, like the inert Micawber, with waiting for a miraculous shower of corn, cabbages, cattle, rent, clothing, and haystacks.

P. W. BALDWIN.

The following epitaph on a stout woman is said to exist in a church yard in the Far West—

Here lies the body of Mary Ann,
Safe on the bosom of Abraham;
It is all very well for Mary Ann,
But it's rather hard lines on Abraham.

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

WE are first told something of St. Paul, or Saul, as he was known before his conversion, to the effect that he was a persecutor of Christians. He appears to have been somewhat accessory to the stoning of Stephen.

It seems he had ventured on another round of persecution when, by supernatural interference, he is checked at the outset, and converted to the creed of those he has hitherto been so aggressive against. Yet there appears something so strange in this miraculous conversion of a man so bitterly hating Christians, that one is rather scrupulous in accepting the story.

He is journeying to Damascus, when a light from heaven suddenly shines round him, and, falling to the ground, he hears a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts ix. 3-5).

First, was Paul travelling by day or night? If by day, what light was that apart from the sun, and moreover, which had the power of converting to Christianity, that shone around him? If by night, what light other than the moon and stars emit was occasioned? Further, the three days of blindness suffered by Paul at his conversion could hardly have been caused by moonlight. But it could have been caused by sunlight; which is very probable, when we remember how powerful is the sun in tropical countries. But that conclusion would be most unsuitable; for then, Paul's conversion would be clearly a case of sunstroke. That he was moonstruck would be equally unsuitable. Probably a little of both lights did the trick.

Besides a light from heaven, a voice is heard from that interesting quarter of space. Now, of late years, Christians have somewhat ceased to be so glib in talking of the regions above. Science finds no evidence of such a place as heaven. In the light of reason its existence is the shadow of a shade. Whence, then, came the voice audible enough for Paul to hear, and for those with him? We can go up a height of five miles in the air by aid of a balloon. Here we experience a most unpleasant change of atmospheric conditions. Breathing becomes difficult, speaking more so, and when one does speak, the sound of the voice is weakened and cannot be heard as easily as at the earth's surface. This being so, what tremendous lung-power was Jesus possessed of so as to overcome the unfavorable aerial conditions, and even more, to make himself heard through such an immensity of distance, assuming that heaven is beyond the range of the most powerful telescope?

The conversion of St. Paul is evidently meant to be a powerful evidence of the truth of Christianity, but we think whoever wrote the Acts has not paid sufficient attention to various small details, such as we have enumerated above.

JAMES H. WATERS.

A FRAGMENT.

'Tis gone once more; the awful mental storm
That tossed the world around me, making Earth
The body, and the solid rocks its bones,
Dance into waves like the unstable ocean—
Is gone and I am calm.

In my madness,
When nothing else was fixed a little star
Guided my ship of Reason to its port—
A thought so plain, so obvious in its truth,
That even madness heard it and was leavened.
'Twas this: "The greatest phantom that torments you,
The Christian God—is but a phantom though
A wild and ignorant Faith has given him power
To work by faithful agents evil deeds."

RON MAHON.

HOW TO HELP US.

- (1) Get your newsagent to exhibit the *Freethinker* in the window.
- (2) Get your newsagent to take a few copies of the *Freethinker* and try to sell them, guaranteeing to take the copies that remain unsold.
- (3) Take an extra copy (or more), and circulate it among your acquaintances.
- (4) Display, or get displayed, one of our contents-sheets, which are of a convenient size for the purpose. Mr. Forder will send them on application.

CARLYLE AND HELL FIRE.

PROFESSOR TYNDALL, in his paper of "Personal Recollections of Thomas Carlyle," contributed to the *Fortnightly Review* a while ago, gives a very vivid and most interesting passage on The Abolition of Hell Fire, being the setting forth of a conversation he held with Thomas Carlyle. It is as follows: "I accompanied Carlyle to Melchet, the beautiful seat of Lady Ashburton, and rode with him through the adjacent New Forest. We drove to Lyndhurst, to see Leighton's frescoes. We frequently walked together. One day, the storm being wild and rude, a refuge from its buffets was thought desirable. He said he knew of one. I accordingly followed his lead to a wood at some distance. We skirted it for a time, and finally struck into it. In the heart of the wood we found a clearing. The trees had been cut down and removed, their low stumps, with smooth transverse sections, remaining behind. It was a solemn spot, perfectly calm, while round the wood sounded the storm. Dry dead fern abounded. Of this I formed a cushion, and, placing it on one of the tree stumps, set him down upon it. I filled his pipe and lighted it, and while he puffed conversation went on. Early in the day, as we roamed over the pastures, he had been complaining of the collapse of religious feeling in England, and I had said to him, 'As regards the most earnest and the most capable of the men of a generation younger than your own, if one writer more than another has been influential in loosing them from their theological moorings, thou art the man!' Our talk was resumed and continued as he sat upon the stump and smoked his placid pipe within hearing of the storm. I said to him, 'Despite all the losses you deplore, there is one great gain. We have extinguished that horrible spectre which darkened with its death-wings so many brave and pious lives. It is something to have abolished Hell-fire!' 'Yes,' he replied, 'that is a distinct and enormous gain. My own father was a brave man, and, though poor, unaccustomed to cower before the face of man; but the Almighty God was a different matter. You and I do not believe that Melchet Court exists, and that we shall return thither, more firmly than he believed that, after his death, he would have to face a judge who would lift him into everlasting bliss or doom him to eternal woe. I could notice that for three years before he died this rugged, honest soul trembled in its depths at even the possible prospect of hell fire. It surely is a great gain to have abolished this Terror.'"

ACID DROPS.

Every brain-worker, every musician, and every sick and sleepless person, knows that church bells are a terrible nuisance. They are only tolerable when you are at a distance from them. In great towns they should be interdicted altogether. Fancy a literary man just settled down cozily, after a cup of tea, for a nice evening's work. He has been writing for nearly an hour, his brain is splendidly active, his ideas flow freely, and his pen flies over the paper; when suddenly a wretched "clang! clang! clang!" breaks upon his ears. "Clang! clang! clang!" it goes on with relentless persistence until he is half maddened. It won't leave off and it won't become musical. At length it *does* leave off, either because the bell-ringer is tired, or because the usual congregation of six women and children has assembled. But it leaves off too late for the poor scribe; his mental harmony is gone; his nerves are all jangled, and pens, ink, and paper have to be put aside for a more favorable opportunity.

Fleet-street, London (but, after all, why say *London*? There is only one Fleet-street) is the great literary centre of London. In it and around it are nearly all the great newspaper offices. But church bells have no respect for editorial sanctums, and the local steeples pour forth their clangorous noise as though the newspaper offices were all on the other side of the Crystal Palace. St. Bride's is a very great sinner. It drives scores of "literary gents" nearly mad. One of them recently grew savage as St. Bride's bells were ringing out their evening peal. He entered the gospel-shop and demanded that the bells should cease. It was in vain that the officials tried to pacify him; he would not be pacified at any price; and eventually a policeman was summoned to eject him from the sacred premises.

There is a gentleman in Leeds who believed in the efficacy of prayer. Whether he does so now is open to doubt. It appears that he applied for a situation under the School Board, and went to the gallery at a Board meeting, where he burst out into a fervent prayer that the Lord would incline the hearts of the Board to give him the situation. He was requested to desist, but he went on praying, and had to be turned out; though the officials did not manage to expel him before he got to "Amen!"

Jesus Christ was a wonderful person. Millions of people say he was God. But somehow he made a lot of mistakes. He said, for instance, that Providence looked after the birds; and thousands of sermons have been preached on this falsehood. It used to be affirmed, and is *still* affirmed where listeners are credulous enough to believe it, that Providence directs the birds in their migration to the south, and tells them when to go and when to return. But science shows us that this is all fudge. Mr. Dixon, in his recent work on *The Migration of Birds*, tells us that, "Migration, instead of being a pleasant path in the wake of retreating summer or in the van of advancing spring, is the most fatal undertaking in the life of migrant birds, and few there be that survive it." The vast majority perish; a minority survive and return, and breed a fresh multitude to perish in the next migration.

The "C. H. Spurgeon Memorial Fund" Committee appear to be sending circulars to some very unlikely persons. One was received by Professor Tyndall. He has not sent a subscription, but he has written a letter, in which he states that he once found Mrs. Carlyle reading one of Spurgeon's sermons. She turned to Tyndall and said, "He is a good man, and he is doing good among his fellow-men." The Professor says to the Committee, "This, I think, is the best contribution that I can send you towards a memorial to Mr. Spurgeon." Of course, it isn't what the Committee wanted; but "between him and me," says Tyndall, "on many points, there was a great gulf fixed."

"Christ is God made easy." So says the Rev. Bernard J. Snell. Somebody is wanted now to make Christ easy. Christian divines have been at it for many hundreds of years, but they haven't made much progress. What a chance for Mr. Snell!

It seems rather mean of Jehovah to let a minister's house be "burgled" while the minister is engaged in the sanctuary. We see that while the Rev. F. Allen was conducting Sunday evening service at Chatham his house was broken into, and money and articles stolen to the value of £30. How does this fit in with the efficacy of prayer?

The Rev. J. W. Dawson has left Methodism to take a Congregational church—the famous one in Highbury-quadrant. His first sermon there was preached on Sunday week. A Christian contemporary remarks that, "The congregation was a well-to-do one. The ladies were in the majority." Of course!

"The Curse of Drink" still rages in Christian England. It does not seem to be affected by all the sermons against it. Some *secular* method of treatment is necessary. Perhaps something may be learned from a leading city in "inddel France." At Marseilles the Savings Bank set to work to stem the flowing tide of alcohol. It built model dwellings, offered loans to working men desiring to build for themselves, and established savings banks in connexion with all the schools. It also gave popular scientific lectures on the effects of alcohol. The result is that in two or three years the tide has been stopped, and it now promises to ebb.

Dr. Newman Smyth's *Christian Ethics* is very highly praised in the *Christian World*, though the quotations from it do not give us any extravagant idea of its merits. In one respect Dr. Smyth is ahead of the majority of Christians; in fact, ahead of Jesus Christ. He thinks that "There are conditions other than adultery in which the whole ethical and spiritual truth of marriage is so destroyed, that for the innocent person to continue in the marriage state would be abhorrent to all pure instincts, and would seem itself to be like a participation in an adulterous relation." But this is too much for the *Christian World*, which says that Dr. Smyth is "here undoubtedly on very debatable ground."

and that he "writes from an American standpoint"—which, of course, is no answer, but merely an evasion. The fact is, the marriage laws will never be rationalised until the teaching of Jesus and Paul on sexual matters is swept aside. In other words, this reform, like so many others, will only be won in the teeth of Christian opposition.

The recent discussion as to whether Catholic Bishops are expected to carry out (when they can) their oath to persecute heretics, should not be allowed to pass without recalling what the late Cardinal Newman wrote on the toleration of active heretics. For his own part, he said, he could never have cut off a Puritan's ears, and the sight of a Spanish *auto-da-fé* would have been the death of him. Nevertheless he said of the heresiarch, or leading and proselytising heretic, that he "should meet with no mercy; he assumes the office of the Tempter; and so far forth as his error goes, must be dealt with by the competent authority, as if he were embodied evil. To spare him is a false and dangerous pity." Such is the honest logic of persecution; and thus the Catholic Church will always speak when she feels it safe to do so.

The *National Observer* considers the Church Army feebly following in the footsteps of the Salvationists, is "a foolish blunder on the part of so august an institution as the Church." But the Church must strive to retain its hold on the populace, even though it has to resort to the sensational penny-gaff methods of Booth and Co.

The *Standard* made a silly blunder in writing on the proposal to purchase "Gordon's Garden Tomb" at Jerusalem. It took the proposal for one for purchasing the traditional site of the Holy Sepulchre, and so bringing us into the existing disputes between the Greeks and Latins in the Holy City. But the proposal is really one to set up a rival Holy Sepulchre, and although there is no evidence in its favor, it will be quite as authentic as the traditional one. By the way, the giving up of this traditional site is tantamount to a confession that the Church does not know where its Savior was crucified and buried. And that's a fact.

The American Catholic *Universe* makes a quotation from a well-known work by the late Cardinal H. E. Manning, and by a wild mischance, or piece of malice on the part of Satan, or some printer's devil, by the misprint of a single letter, cites the cardinal's work as "The *Infernal* Mission of the Holy Ghost."

Tit-Bits says that at the Congregational Church at Park-street, Croydon, the first minister was named Parkinson, the second Parkins, and the third and present pastor is Park. They are afraid to change now lest they fall below par.

Among food for invalids we see "Angels on Horseback" mentioned. We do not know what kind of animals these are, but if like the chariots and horses of fire that took up old Elijah, we should fancy they must be very indigestible.

Last year, *Nature* says, an Aino in the island of Yezo caught two bears, one of which was perfectly white. It was not a polar bear, but an albino of the common species of brown bear. This capture created great excitement among the natives, as the white bear is one of their gods, and is supposed to live on an inaccessible mountain, and never to let himself be seen by human beings. The Ainos concluded that the captured animal was an emissary of the god, and sent it as a present to the Mikado. A white animal is always supposed to be a good omen for the reigning monarch, and the reign of one ancient Mikado is known as "the period of the white pheasant." Among the Japanese, as among ourselves and our ancestors, white horses take a prominent part in great processions; and they are still found in connection with temples in Japan, as well as among the Mongols.

The *Cape Argus* gives a good story of the Christian missionary in Damaraland. It appears he was well received by the chief, given plenty of beef and beer, and allowed to baptise and teach the children, until unfortunately, Nangoro, one of his pupils, a near relation of the chief, fell sick and died. He had been baptised, and was buried with Christian rites. Then Nayuma, the chief, asked the missionary, "When is Nangoro coming back?" "What!" cried the astonished missionary. "When are you going to bring my

boy back?" "But he is dead." "Yes, but you promised that those who believed should never die but live for ever."

The missionary vainly tried to explain that the second life was in some other part of the universe, but the chief only said: "You are not going to humbug me like that. I'll give you ten days, and then I shall come again. Mind you have Nangoro ready for me." Ten days afterwards he returned with many warriors and demanded his boy. The missionary vainly expostulated, and tried to teach him the Christian doctrine of the resurrection and immortality. Nayuma said: "Take your God and go; you are both frauds. Never show your face here again, or it will be worse for you and your God also." So the missionary had to make tracks from Damaraland.

The English missionaries at Fernando Po, West Africa, are said to be on the verge of starvation, because the Spanish will not permit them to barter tobacco for food from the natives.

The negroes of the Southern States profess themselves a religious as well as a law-abiding people. But when feeling is roused the Christian precepts of "Resist not evil," etc, are thrown to the winds. A colored woman was outraged by white men at Columbus, Georgia, and on Sunday from his pulpit the justly indignant colored minister declared that "if the law does not give us justice, we will obtain justice for ourselves."

The Sunderland comic, *Up to Date*, under the title of "Discussion Challenged: a Farce in Black and White," gives a humorous dressing to the colored champion of Christianity who has recently been pushing his wares in that town.

Mr. Stead has undertaken to translate the Bible into the vernacular. He has eighteen translators at work on the New Testament, and expects to publish the Gospels and Acts this year. Such a work might be of immense service if doubtful and interpolated passages were marked and authorities given, and the history of each book traced as far as facts can be ascertained.

The Rev. Charles Spencer Newham, vicar of Prestobee, Stoneclough, near Bolton, has run into such heavy debts that his living has been sequestered through his bankruptcy. Instead of attending to his parish duty he lived on the continent in the summer and autumn months.

Under examination in the Bankruptcy Court, Parson Newham admitted having spent £12 17s. in entertaining a Bishop and some clergymen at a confirmation. His account for beer, wine, and spirits in three years totalled up to £119. This, he said, included the cost of communion wine; say two bottles a month, two dozen a year, or six dozen in three years. At 20s. a dozen this comes to £6—not a very big hole in £119.

The Lord Mayor elect is a Roman Catholic. His election was bitterly opposed by some rabid Protestants. They said the Catholic Church would persecute again if it could. Of course. And so would the Protestant Church, Freethought and Humanity are too much for both of them.

Some of those rabid Protestants help to maintain laws against Freethinkers. But that isn't persecution. Oh dear no! Such laws are only persecution when their victims are Protestants.

The Jaffa-Jerusalem railway has been opened with a religious ceremony. Three white sheep with gilded horns were slaughtered on the rails at the Jerusalem terminus, and an Imam offered up a prayer, after which the locomotive advanced over the ensanguined spot. This ceremony is supposed to keep evil spirits off the line. What a curious mixture of science and superstition!

The Shereef of Wazan is dead. He was the recognised head of the Mohammedan religion, but intellectually a poor creature, who is said not to have been able to read the Koran. Despite the teetotalism of his creed, he was very fond of champagne. Being remonstrated with by some of his stricter followers, he replied, "True, the champagne in the bottle is intoxicating, but when poured out in the glass

in my hand it becomes as simple as water." And they believed him!

A Freethinker once made this small petition
Unto a member of the Inquisition:
"Pray tell me, holy sir—no doubt you can,
How many creeds divide the race of man?"
"Ten, fifty—nay a hundred," said the priest;
"Fully this number there must be at least."
"If so," cried the other, "Why, thou grave defaulter,
Condemn us heretics to flame or halter?
When to whatever faith you may belong,
'Tis ninety-nine to one you may be wrong."

The German religious census is a great joke. It shows 17,671,929 Catholics, and 31,026,810 Protestants. Only 562 are unclassified. Where then are the Freethinkers? They are included in the Protestants. Strauss himself was a "Protestant." In Germany it doesn't necessarily mean a Christian.

The Rev. R. W. Wynter, rector of Wellingborough, has found a new argument for the legal eight hours' day. Speaking at the Peterborough Diocesan Conference, he demands, "How could working men say their prayers—as they were often twitted for not doing—if they had not time to say them?" This is a specimen of the intellectual advantage labor may derive from the support of the Church.

Some of the answers of the probationers who submit themselves as candidates for the ministry are as amusing as any of the Board School essays. Thus the Rev. Alex. Soutar says a candidate, when asked what sins of omission were, replied: "They are sins that you ought to have committed, but don't." Faith, according to another candidate, was "believing in what you know is not true." This candidate hit the bullseye at the first shot.

Answers says that chronic tea-poisoning is called "The-ism." We thought that name was already appropriated to another kind of poisoning.

Another outbreak against Christian missionaries in China is reported. The epidemics in the Central Provinces are said to have incensed the natives against the Christians. When the Jews had any troubles their prophets always attributed it to their departure from the faith, and a similar superstition appears to prevail in China.

The official estimate of the deaths from cholera in Russia up to Sept. 1 is 174,000, but medical authorities state that if unreported cases were added the total would exceed 200,000. But then God kills every one at last.

George Arthur Martin Harvey, the insurance broker's clerk, who committed suicide on the Great Eastern Railway, left a note in which he said "God will surely protect" his baby. Evidently he was no Atheist.

Sister Maxima, a young nun at Agram, has been found dead at the foot of a saint's statuette in the loft of a convent there. She had for some time past shown signs of mental derangement through religion, saying she was a terrible sinner, and unworthy to tread God's earth. She had taken carbolic acid, intended for disinfecting purposes. One more unfortunate added to the long list of victims to religion.

There has been quite an epidemic of suicide lately, and not one case appears to be that of an Atheist. Lois Davis, who threw himself into the sea at St. Leonards, left a note saying, "May God forgive me for what I am doing." John Haughs, head gardener at the Park Farm Estate, Eltham, who cut his throat, left a note saying he "would make his peace with God and be with his blessed mother, who he knew was in Paradise."

Mr. John Danielly, of Philadelphia, committed suicide in a Baptist church. Leaning against the Communion rail, he drew his revolver, and shot himself twice in the head. He was a deacon and a constant worshipper.

The Rev. Thomas Cooke Saunders, of Oxford, has committed suicide. He was a hard drinker, and sometimes kicked up a great row during his drinking bouts. He cut his throat before a looking-glass, then drank a bottle of port, and laid

down on the couch to await his death. It was a characteristic ending.

Dr. Heron appears to have believed in another life, for he wrote something about "joining" Miss Russell. Christians will please note this.

Dr. Heron's suicide has called attention to the English law against "self-slaughter," according to which a person who kills himself must be buried ignominiously. Juries don't like to let the law take its course, so they bring in a verdict of "insanity." This is sometimes very absurd, and in Dr. Heron's case especially so. He acted with perfect sanity and deliberation.

Referring to Dr. Heron's case, the *Pall Mall Gazette* says "he accepted Dr. Donne's dictum that it is the duty of a man to die rather than suffer dishonor." Dr. Donne was a contemporary of Shakespeare. He was one of the greatest preachers of the Church of England.

The Rev. C. M. S. Mules, vicar of Curry Rivet, Somerset, is another clerical bankrupt. His liabilities amount to £6,221, and his assets are nil. His insolvency is attributed to excessive interest on borrowed money and to losses on the turf. A nice example to his parishioners!

The storm in part of Cheshire and North Wales has been unusually severe, much damage having been done to the crops, etc. Mrs. Roberts, wife of the rector of Llangwm, was blown into the river Alyne and drowned. And yet the wicked infidels say God (if he exists) is not good.

Mr. Percy Russell, the editor of a goody-goody paper called the *Welcome Hour*—from its dulness we should say that was the hour for sleep—laments that the State "shrinks altogether from any endeavor to teach the ignorant masses that there is a God." It doesn't strike Mr. Percy Russell that if God wanted the ignorant masses taught his existence, he would demonstrate himself. He forgets, too, that the State does heavily endow religion to teach the existence of God and the big train of nonsense which follows in the wake of that belief.

A Sunday-school teacher was explaining to her small pupils the stocking of the ark with its animated population by Noah. "The animals all went in two by two," she told them. "Did the insects go too?" inquired a six-year-old girl of the class. "Yes," said the teacher, "insects and all." "Why, it must have been horrid to have the fleas and mosquitoes there," said this tiny critic; "why didn't they leave them out?"

The *Contemporary* opens with an anonymous paper on "The Policy of the Pope," by someone evidently well acquainted with his subject. He shows the Holy See still claims the right to control the political actions of Catholics, and that in face of facts in Ireland, France, Germany, Austro-Hungary, and Italy, it is absurd to credit the pretence that Papal interference in the domestic affairs of nations is a thing of the past. The Papacy seems to be sacrificing all other interests to ruin the Triple Alliance, in the hope of thereby restoring its temporal power. A paper on the relation of the Papacy to modern science is to follow.

Father Martino, the new general of the Jesuits, about whose election so much secrecy was made recently, is a Spaniard, like Ignazio Loyola. This is a disappointment at Farm-street, the London headquarters of the Jesuits. It is no secret that English and American Jesuits hoped for a progressive Black Pope, one even who would claim the alliance of science, and force the papacy into further patronage of democracy. But the spirit of obedience is so strong in the order, that there is little doubt whatever the policy of Father Martino it will be as powerfully supported and as rigidly adhered to as that of his predecessors.

At the Peterborough Diocesan Conference, the Rev. Canon Roberts, speaking on the duty of supporting the Church-schools, declared that if the font of education was secularised, the morals of this country, in his opinion, were gone. This is something like the tallow chandler declaring that if people took to the electric light, they would be left in darkness.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, October 9, Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.:—11.15, "The French Revolution—1792 and 1892"; at 7, "Ernest Renan: Writer and Freethinker."

Wednesday, October 12, Hall of Science, Old-street; at 8, "The Philosophy of Atheism."

October 16, Hall of Science, London; 23, Newcastle; 26, Spennymoor; 27, Blyth; 28, Ebchester; 29, Bolden Colliery; 30, South Shields.

Nov. 6, Camberwell; 13 and 20, Hall of Science; 27, Manchester.

Dec. 4, Grimsby; 11 and 18, Hall of Science, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—October 9 and 16, Birmingham; 18, Dundee; 19, 20 and 21, Aberdeen; 23, Glasgow; 25 and 26, Belfast; 30, Edinburgh. Nov. 8, Chester; 6 and 13, Birmingham; 20, Sheffield; 27, Hall of Science, London. Dec. 4, Hall of Science; 11, Manchester; 18 and 25, Birmingham.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent direct to him at Baskerville Hall, The Crescent, Birmingham.

H. TOWNSEND.—Thanks. See "Sugar Plums." Write again when you have fresh progress to report.

C. WRIGHT.—Steele, in the *Spectator*, says the word *cant* was derived from one Andrew Cant, a Scotch sky-pilot who had the gift of preaching in a manner that he was understood by none but his own congregation, and not by all of them.

R. F. FOX writes that he is very much pleased that the Secularists who attend the London Hall of Science on Sunday evenings can now repair to the Minor Hall after the lecture and enjoy friendly intercourse with each other.

B. U. Z.—Send the box of old clothes, books, etc., to Miss Vance, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C. The contents will be distributed to advantage.

J. W. BUTTERWORTH.—The same thing has already appeared.

O. E. CLIBURN.—Cuttings are always welcome.

P. KAUL.—It is a very old piece of Protestant verse, and has done duty thousands of times. Sorry your trouble was in vain.

T. PATEMAN.—The tone of your long epistle convinces us you are one of the "true disciples of Jesus" of whom you write.

O. LEWIS.—Pray express our thanks to the Cheshire Branch.

R. O. SMITH, hon. treasurer, London Secular Federation, acknowledges £1 8s. 6d. collected by Miss Robins at the Bradlaugh celebration at the Hall of Science.

E. WALL.—No person called Slater ever had anything to do with the *Freethinker*. It is an absolute invention.

F. CHAPMAN.—The book by Mrs. Besant is out of print. Mr. Forder can supply you with the two others at sixpence each.

E. H. LLOYD.—Glad to hear of the great success of your first indoor meeting at Edmonton.

JOHN EASTON.—Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen is an authority upon Assyrian archaeology. We never heard of him as an authority on geology.

W. S.—Thanks for occupying some of your enforced leisure in bed in cutting out newspaper bits for us. We hope you will soon be restored to health.

TOUZEAU PARRIS has changed his address to Clare Lodge, Upper Mall, Hammersmith.

J. B. COPPOCK.—It must have missed us in some way. We have written a paragraph in the present number.

D. HENRY.—Shelley was expelled from Oxford for writing a *Defence of Atheism* before he wrote *Queen Mab*. The poet's Atheism was recently dealt with in two leading articles in the *Freethinker*. We cannot add more on the subject at present.

MISS VANCE, 28 Stonecutter-street, desires Freethought lecturers to send their present addresses for the N.S.S. *Almanack*. She also reminds Branch secretaries that particulars, as per circular sent them, should be sent to her by October 15.

RON MAHON.—Shall be pleased to hear from you again when you have leisure. Our circulation is improving. Last week's sale showed a further improvement. It will be some time, however, even at this rate, before we can be free from financial trouble.

W. WILTON (Melbourne, Australia).—The letter of the emperor Hadrian, in which he identifies the worshippers of Christ with the worshippers of Serapis has never been challenged by competent authority. You may consult the passage in Lardner. The writer of *Supernatural Religion* was, we believe, Mr. W. R. Cassells. Mr. J. J. Tayler, a Unitarian, wrote challenging the Fourth Gospel. Our opinion of Mr. Johnson's *Rise of Christendom* is given in "Book Chat."

P. H. ECHLIN.—See "Acid Drops."

T. MAY.—(1) As you are not a member of the Branch we do not see that your opinion is of any particular importance. (2) Radical was a Freethinker. We have not seen his *History of Pricethood*.

S. HALE.—You must settle your dispute with Mr. Moss outside our columns. He was quite right in telling you it was

absurd to ask Professor Huxley to submit the question whether the Bible was opposed to Science to "arbitration." Arbitration is a good way of settling quarrels, but not controversies.

J. P. GILMOUR.—Obliged to shorter. Harry Long isn't worth so much space.

R. D. TURNER.—Misprints will sometimes occur in the best regulated papers.

J. KEAST.—Obliged to summarise, as we were already overset.

G. MACREADY.—Thanks for your letter. We are surprised to hear it is so difficult to get a hall for Freethought lectures at Northampton. It seems high time an attack was made on Christian bigotry there. Write us again as soon as possible.

AJAX.—A correspondent tells us you can get the *Freethinker* in James-street, Oxford-street, and in Duke-street, Manchester-square; also at Mrs. Robbins's Edgware-road (near Chapel-street).

J. CLOSE.—Your letter misled us. We are glad to hear that Mr. Joseph Howdon, whom we prematurely buried last week, is still alive and flourishing. What do you mean by saying you have "filled up the service" in readiness?

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish to call our attention.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Der Lichtfreund—Boston Investigator—

Open Court—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Der Arme Teufel

—Liberty—Liberator—Progressive Thinker—Flaming Sword

—Secular Thought—Modern Thought—Twentieth Century—

Correspondenzblatt des Deutschen Freidenker Bundes—

Fur Unsere Jugend—Freethinker's Magazine—Truthseeker

—Western Figaro—Clarion—Church Reformer—Ironclad

Age—Independent Pulpit—La Vérité Philosophique—Echo

—Clarion—Up to Date—Boston Guardian—Welcome Hour

—Bournemouth Visitor's Directory—Bristol Mercury—Star

—Pudsey Advertiser—Carlisle Journal—Cape Argus—Man-

chester Guardian—Edinburgh Evening News—Moralist.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor,

14 Clerkenwell-green, London, E.C. All business communi-

cations to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every

succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements* :—

One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special

terms for repetitions.

The *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the office, post

free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.;

Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d.

It being contrary to Post-office regulations to announce on the

wrapper when the subscription is due, subscribers will

receive the number in a colored wrapper when their sub-

scription expires.

THE WEST HAM BRANCH.

MISS COLVILLE, the secretary, has not called the "quarterly meeting," which was to have been held on Sunday, the committee having decided that they could not have it just at present. Quarters seem to occur at irregular intervals in West Ham. Of course this is mere contumacy; and as the Executive, having considered this matter, approves of my action, and desires me to continue it, I must summon the meeting myself. As President of the National Secular Society I herewith call upon the members of the West Ham Branch to meet me on Friday evening October 14, at 8 o'clock, at Mr. Fulcher's Room, 33 High-street, Plaistow. I also invite the attendance of past members of the Branch, who have left it in consequence of the recent disputes, and are willing to rejoin. I shall be accompanied by Mr. Robert Forder, the N.S.S. honorary secretary, and one or two members of the Organisation Committee. Before we leave the matter will be settled. The Branch will be renovated, and steps will be taken to carry on an active propaganda in the district. I am prepared to deliver two, three, or four free lectures myself, and the Organisation Committee will see to the rest.

G. W. FOOTE (President).

SUGAR PLUMS.

"FREETHINKER" SUSTENTATION FUND—(To enable us to maintain this journal at its present size and price until its increasing circulation reaches the paying point).—Cheshire Branch N.S.S., 8s.; O. A. Page, 10d.; J. Kennedy, £1; Young Recruit (3rd sub.), 2s. 6d.; H. Gadd, 5s.; R. Thompson, 1s. 1d.

Mr. Foote was to have lectured at the London Hall of Science this evening (Oct. 9) on "Holy Absurdities," but this is a subject that will keep, and Mr. Foote will substitute for it a lecture on "Ernest Renan: Writer and Freethinker." No doubt this subject, being of immediate interest, will attract a

larger audience. In the morning Mr. Foote lectures on "The French Revolution: 1792-1892." The admission to this lecture is free.

The Wednesday evening lectures at the London Hall of Science will begin *next* Wednesday (Oct. 12), when Mr. Foote will deliver the first of two discourses on "The Philosophy of Atheism." The first will deal with Atheism on the intellectual side, the second on the moral and imaginative side. Ample opportunity will be allowed for discussion.

On more than one occasion, when Mr. Foote has been visiting the north, the black champion of Christianity has been brought to the town to deliver free lectures on the same day. This device was tried on Sunday at Liverpool. As soon as Mr. Foote's bills were out announcing his subjects the black champion's bills were got out with somewhat similar titles. The object, of course, was to spoil Mr. Foote's meetings, by keeping away Christians at least. But this was not accomplished. Mr. Foote's meetings on Sunday were the largest he has had for many years in Liverpool. The audiences were extremely enthusiastic, and the Branch committee is delighted with the day's proceedings. After each lecture there was a good deal of questioning and discussion.

The Liverpool Branch is not making the headway it expected with its Hall Company. Apparently a good time must elapse before the project can be carried to a successful issue. Meanwhile the Branch is anxious to engage the large Odd-fellows' Hall in which Mr. Foote lectured for its Sunday evening meetings, which are at present held in one of the lower rooms. We hope a sufficient guarantee will be furnished by the well-to-do members to enable the Committee to make this desirable change. We advise the Committee to calculate the precise amount that will be required for a six months' tenancy, and to make *personal* application to those who are likely to give support.

Mr. Watts lectured again at the London Hall of Science on Sunday. In the morning he opened the winter season's free lectures, and spoke to a good audience. The evening meeting was a fine one, notwithstanding the wretched weather. The Rev. Mr. Duff sent an apology for not attending, but several questions were asked by persons in the body of the hall.

Nearly all the prominent workers of the National Secular Society in London were present at the social gathering at the Hall of Science on Wednesday, September 28, in commemoration of Charles Bradlaugh's birthday. Mr. G. W. Foote presided at the speechmaking, and, after his introductory remarks, addresses were delivered by G. J. Holyoake, Toussau Parris, A. B. Moss, R. Forder, G. Standring, and Charles Watts. All the speakers were in good form, and the audience was pleased with many felicitous comments on the career of our lost leader. It should be added that Mr. Holyoake travelled up from Brighton, and Mr. Watts from Birmingham, while Mr. Parris attended at considerable risk, having temporarily lost the sight of his right eye through a severe inflammation.

More than one of the speakers made reference to the Hall of Science as a practical memorial to Charles Bradlaugh, the place having been consecrated by his presence and eloquence. Mr. Foote said it was there that he first became acquainted with Mr. Bradlaugh; there that he first became a worker in the Freethought cause; and there, also, it was that their great leader used to meet his friends at critical moments in his career, and explain to them his plans for the future. There his great London demonstrations were organised, and there he came in the evening of the day when he was brutally ejected from the precincts of the House of Commons. There he met the members of the N.S.S. for the last time, when he resigned the presidency. There he delivered his last Freethought lecture a month or two before his death. All these points were caught up by the audience, who cheered every pointed reference to the successful future of the Hall of Science.

After the speeches there was a concert in the minor hall and dancing in the large hall. Those present were not austere ascetics. They thought the birth of Charles Bradlaugh a matter for rejoicing, as Mr. Holyoake said; and they

thought respect for the dead quite consistent with the innocent recreation of the living.

We take this opportunity of making a fresh appeal on behalf of the National Secular Hall Society, which is now in actual possession of the Hall of Science. During the summer we have let the matter rest, but now the winter season is approaching we once more invite the assistance of all Freethinkers who prefer practical enterprises to dreamy projects. A good deal more of the purchase money has yet to be paid in annual instalments, and the Directors want to rebuild the front part of the premises as soon as possible, so that the place may be made more worthy of Charles Bradlaugh's memory, and more creditable and useful to the Secular party. We therefore ask our friends and supporters throughout the world to lose no time in taking shares in the National Secular Hall Society. Well-to-do Freethinkers may take several shares (the limit is two hundred), and the poorest may take one, the amount being payable in easy instalments of half-a-crown per share. Let us carry this scheme to perfect success, and the Directors will then use their powers to establish other Secular Institutes in London and the provinces. The Society may be developed into a great proprietary organisation, securing and extending the *practical* interests of our party, until the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws gives the National Secular Society absolute legal security for property held in its own name.

Mr. Forder has ceased to be honorary secretary of the Hall syndicate, but he remains on the Board of Directors. It was not his intention to occupy the post permanently. He labored ungrudgingly to get the scheme fairly afloat, and having done that he retires, leaving the routine work to a modestly paid secretary—Miss E. M. Vance—to whom all letters and applications should now be addressed.

Mr. A. B. Moss intends to bring out as soon as possible a new volume of *Christianity and Evolution*. A number of copies have been subscribed for, but more promises of support are needed before the work can be published. Intending subscribers should address to Mr. Moss, or to his publishers, Watts and Co., 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C.

Freethought is making headway even in Devonshire. Two of our friends at Barnstaple have been circulating our Tracts, and getting a newsagent to sell the *Freethinker*. He disposes of six copies weekly, and will display a contents-sheet when the sale reaches a dozen. We notice that, at a recent meeting in a Baptist chapel, the Rev. J. Ruddy complained that the young people walked the streets rather than go to church. He also said he had been informed that there was an Infidel Club in Barnstaple. We are glad to hear it, and hope it is true.

The Lambeth Branch has had a successful outdoor lecturing season. During the winter it will gather its forces for the next season. The indoor Lectures will not be resumed. In the present circumstances the officers prefer to hold themselves free to attend the Hall of Science on Sunday evenings to hear the best lecturers. They wish to meet the members of the Branch there on the first Sunday in each month.

The West London Branch has removed its outdoor lecture-station from Salisbury-road to High-road (corner of Priory Park-road). The committee will meet for urgent business this evening (October 9) at 9, at the "Duke of York," Notting Hill.

The adjourned meeting of the Finsbury Park and Ball's Pond Branches will take place at the Minor Hall of Science to-day (Oct. 9) at 6.30. A large attendance is desired, as important business will be discussed.

Dr. T. R. Allinson lectures at the Battersea Secular Hall next Sunday evening (Oct. 16) on "Health, and How to Keep It." The tickets are 3d. and 6d., and only a limited number are obtainable.

The Nottingham Branch, at its adjourned special meeting on Sunday, came to certain resolutions as to future work. After Mr. Hooper's lecture this evening (Oct. 9) arrangements will be made for a Debating Society, and for a regular course of entertainments on Sunday afternoons for the children. Other matters will be dealt with according to opportunity.

The Chatham Branch reports that its meetings are steadily improving in its own hall at New Brompton. The choir is now in a fair state of efficiency. We are delighted to hear that the amount owing to the builder when the hall was opened on Good Friday is now paid off. The Branch tenders its earnest thanks to all who have assisted in bringing about this happy result.

The Sheffield Secular Society held a soiree and ball on the same evening as the N.S.S. in London in commemoration of Charles Bradlaugh's birthday. Mr. Thomas Woodcock, the president, delivered a sympathetic and effective speech. He also presented the Society with a fine photograph of the Manchester picture of Charles Bradlaugh standing at the bar of the House of Commons. After musical selections by several ladies and gentlemen, the proceedings terminated with a couple of hours' dancing.

Mr. G. H. Martin, secretary to the Liberty of Bequest Committee, and author of *Antidotes to Superstition*, is anxious to be serviceable on the Freethought platform. Letters should be addressed to him at 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, London, E.C.

Mr. Stanley Jones has debated at Glasgow with Harry Long, the rabid Orangeman, on Genesis and Science. Mr. Gilmour informs us that Mr. Jones scored an easy victory. But that is not saying much. Harry Long knows as much about science as we know about ballooning.

During last week Mr. J. Grinstead, Vestry Hall preacher, has been replying at Bristol to Mr. Foote's lectures—which he did not hear. He has had crowded meetings in the same hall. We are glad to hear it. It will keep the pot boiling.

Mr. Grinstead's lectures were opposed by Messrs. Huln and Keast, who were well received, and able to let the Christians see the big holes in the lecturer's armor. At the close Mr. Keast proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Grinstead for coming out into the open to meet Freethinkers. This was seconded by Mr. Bedell, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sam Standing, being free now from any special ties at Manchester, is going to and fro and up and down in the district covered by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Federation. He has managed to stir up the Rochdale friends, who are pushing forward their propagandist work. The N.S.S. Branch was represented by Mr. Standing the other evening at a meeting in the Town Hall, presided over by the Mayor, the object of which was to start a Social Reforms Union. Blackburn also is waking up. Mr. Standing held three successful open-air meetings there on Sunday, and several new members joined the Branch.

The new number of the *Agnostic Annual* will soon be published by Watts and Co. Among the contributors are Dr. Momerie, Mr. Leslie Stephen, Mr. Edward Clodd, Mr. Gerald Massey, Mr. Charles Watts, and Mr. Samuel Laing.

Secular Thought contains a report of the annual Convention of the Canadian Secular Union on September 10. Captain Adams delivered the presidential address. After the secretary's report a brief address was delivered by Mr. Underwood. Strict business being concluded, a public meeting was held in the evening in the Academy of Music, at which Mr. B. F. Underwood delivered an oration. We observe that a committee of five was appointed to see to financial support for *Secular Thought*, and that the old officers were re-elected.

Among the resolutions passed by the Canadian Convention was the following: "That the Union regards with feelings of satisfaction and encouragement the great progress made by the National Secular Society of England, under the Presidency of Mr. G. W. Foote, and with the able assistance of Mr. Charles Watts and other lecturers; and earnestly hopes that the exertions now being made to secure a permanent home for the headquarters of Freethought in the metropolis, where the name of the late great leader of our cause, Charles Bradlaugh, may be honorably enshrined and perpetuated, will be crowned with success." Carried unanimously.

Now the Convention is over, and the interests of *Secular Thought* are to be taken care of, we are more free than ever to express our view that the maintenance of that excellent

journal should continue to be the first consideration with the Canadian Secularists.

The Tory *National Observer* devotes some space to Mr. Conway's *Life of Paine* under the heading "The Father of Radicals." It is rather ill-natured towards Paine, but says: "He did but invent Gladstonism a century before its time." It concludes: "This is an excellent good book, and if it be read by all who should read it—by everyone, that is, who is interested in the history of Radicalism—Mr. Conway must make his fortune."

In the *Spectator* of Oct. 1 Mr. Leslie Stephen pays a striking tribute to the high qualities of his friend Professor Croom Robertson, editor of *Mind*, and author of an able book on the Freethinking philosopher Hobbes.

Mr. H. E. Smith, of Ravensworth, contributes an interesting letter to the *Clevedon Gazette*. He enquires why Mr. W. T. Stead is always calling upon Sir Charles Dilke to repent and confess, when his own bosom crony, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, is notoriously accused of forging a story about a converted Atheist. Why, asks Mr. Smith, does not the virtuous Stead call upon the pious Hughes to clear his reputation or confess and ask forgiveness?

Our friends seem to have been well to the fore in opposing the Rev. A. J. Harrison at Farsley. Messrs. Grange, H. Smith, and A. B. Wakefield were among his opponents, and their speeches seem fairly reported in the *Pudsey District Advertiser*.

Mr. Anderson, the Club manager at the London Hall of Science, is going to organize a Tuesday evening dancing class for members of the N.S.S. and their friends only. The fee will be 5s. per quarter, and the class will be started as soon as a dozen members are secured. The idea is a good one, and we shall be glad to hear of its success.

Mr. J. B. Coppock, who conducts the Science Classes at the Camberwell Secular Hall, has changed his address to Rosa Villa, 3 Ivy-lane, Brockley, S.E. Mr. Coppock's classes are just re-opening for the winter season, and should be largely attended by young Freethinkers of both sexes. At the last Science and Art Department examinations, one of his pupils obtained a prize, another a first, and four a second, in Inorganic Chemistry. One obtained a prize, and two a second in Advanced Hygiene; and three a second in Elementary Hygiene.

Renan's last moments were not disturbed by clerical intruders. No priest called, and if one had done so he would not have been admitted. The great Freethinker had strictly enjoined his family that if he should be foolish in his physical weakness, and ask for a priest, they were to disobey him. Happily his mind remained clear and firm to the last. A few hours before the end, says the *Times* correspondent, he asked his wife, "Why are you so sad?" "Because I see you suffer," she replied. "Be calm and resigned," said the dying man; "we undergo the laws of that nature of which we are a manifestation. We perish, we disappear, but heaven and earth remain, and the march of time goes on for ever."

M. RENAN ON PRAYER.

Men nowadays pray less and less, for they know that no prayer was ever effective. Evidence proves nothing in a question of this sort. If ever there was a deity whose power was established by documents apparently irrefutable, it was the goddess *Rabbat Tanit* of Carthage. Nearly three thousand stela bearing witness to vows made to the goddess have been excavated—they are now for the most part preserved in the National Library of Paris; each and all state that *Rabbat Tanit* heard the prayers addressed to her. These three thousand witnesses to prayer having secured its object certainly deceived themselves. For, indeed, *Rabbat Tanit* being a false deity, could never grant any one's prayer. The efficacy of quinine is proved because in numberless cases quinine, or its substitutes, have modified the course of fever. Did ever prayer secure such proofs? Certainly not. Yet the fact is easy to test, for millions of prayers are daily offered to heaven.—*Studies of Religious History*.

BOOK CHAT.

Mr. John S. Black, M.A., provides the notes and introduction to *The Book of Joshua* in the smaller Cambridge Bible for schools. He fairly admits the book is a conglomeration, and on the stoppage of the sun and moon observes: "Joshua prayed first that the sunlight, and then the moonlight following it, might suffice for the complete defeat of the enemy. The prayer was granted, not, of course, by stoppage of the earth's diurnal rotation, but in the strength which the Israelites obtained to accomplish their task within the natural limits of the light." The veriest child may ask: "Why then does it say, there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel" (Josh. x. 14).

The *Dresdener Wochenblätter*, criticising an important book entitled *Rembrandt as Instructor*, which has reached 37 editions, says: "Germany cannot continue to hold with Christianity, simply because Christianity is un-German; it is no less un-Aryan, and strongly tinctured with Semitic elements. Race distinctions are always important factors, and especially in religion. Rembrandt, as Instructor, himself indicates some points which show the rift between Christianity and German essentials: 'The patient endurance by Christ of his sufferings is more oriental than occidental. German Christianity does not prompt to patient submission to insult, but to open and determined resistance.' It is for this reason that the German Nietzsche, and so many other leading men infinitely prefer the healthy, vigorous Old Testament to the sickly, sentimental New Testament. It is the New Testament, however, which is the chief source of Christianity, and this, like the other, is antiquated and un-German—we want 'new wine.'"

In 1868, there appeared at Dublin, a very curious, out of the way and little known book, entitled *Vox Clamantis, or The Fore, The After-runner*, by Alexander Vance. The work though chiefly made up of scraps of the gospels newly arranged and interpreted, was a museum of curious heresies. The author's ideas are not easy to disentangle, but he seems to have held that modern European Jews were descended from Babylonians, that much of the Old Testament was written near the beginning of the Christian era, the Babylon of the prophets representing Rome, that the gospels contain various strata of thought, and confuse the stories of Jesus and John, attributing to the former much originally written of the latter, that much of their matter had to do with the political end of the Roman world. The work, the author tells us, was the outcome of many years' constant meditation and hard work. We expect it was truly a voice crying in the desert, and doubt if the author made a single convert, though of late years several authors have followed in the direction outlined by A. Vance. Modern criticism has tended vastly to reduce the dates assigned to the Old Testament. M. Ernest Havet, the learned author of *Origines de la Christianisme*, in his last work *La Modernité des Prophetes*, brings down prophetic portions of Jewish scriptures to within measurable distance of the Christian era, even to the days of Herod.

A yet more extraordinary work is the *Rise of Christendom*, by Edwin Johnson, M.A. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co.). This gentleman brings a vast array of learning to the thesis that Judaism and Christianity have taken their rise since the spread of Mohammedanism, and that both the Old and New Testament Scriptures must be dated since the time of the crusades, or as late as between the tenth and twelfth centuries of our era. This theory means the re-writing of all modern history. It ignores the opinion of theological experts concerning the MSS. of the New Testament, and the Septuagint Version of the Old, and it places an immense onus of forgery on the Basilian and Benedictine monks, who are supposed to have written and interpolated writings in order to back up the Christian legends.

These considerations may deter many from giving the *Rise of Christendom* the attention so scholarly a work deserves. The conviction that the author has not so much overturned history as ran off the rails himself, may preclude examination of views which are little more astounding than those of the learned Jesuit, Father Hardouin, who maintained that the greater part of the ancient classics and of ecclesiastical

histories were, in fact, forgeries of the monks. Mr. Johnson has evidently made a far closer examination of the monkish chroniclers of the middle ages than any man of our time, and the conclusions to which he has arrived have been gradually forced upon him. When he wrote *Antiqua Mater*, a previous study of Christian origins (Trübner, 1887), he had only got to see that the Church was a later growth than generally supposed, and that some of the alleged Christian evidences were untrustworthy.

Mr. Johnson's studies have shown him how much the Christian Church was at bottom a monkish institution, and this tends in the direction of its being founded since the great monkish orders. But he gives no attention to the evidence that the vast monastic institution of Buddhism was propagated in all parts of the then known world by missionaries from India, at least as early as the rock inscriptions of Asoka, or 230 B.C. Mr. Johnson claims to have found that the whole of the earliest Church literature proceeded from the cloisters of the two Orders of St. Basil and St. Benedict. The history of the New Testament, he says, lies implicitly in the history of the Service Book. "The epistles, when analysed, fall asunder into a number of lections, or small epistles, and correspondingly the gospels into a number of small gospels. Each forms in the Missal an independent whole, illustrative of the observance of the day." The central legend of the Crucifixion is to be read in the light of the Passion Plays and the antipathy excited thereby against the Jews. "It stands fast in all the writings of the Greek and Latin doctors of the Catalogue that the Passion was purely a dogma derived from mystical exegesis of the Old Testament, and represented as fact by sacred dramatic art."

Mr. Johnson holds that the books of the New Testament were from the first monastic, mystical, sacerdotal, and dogmatic, written in the cloister and for the cloister. "When the reforming monk broke his vows and married a nun, he should have known that the New Testament was no longer a book for him." Such is his extraordinary theory, and it is backed by a wealth of learning and research. *The Rise of Christendom* is emphatically a work for the student. To follow its thesis one should be acquainted with Arabian as well as European mediæval literature. For ourselves it has left us unconvinced. That the burden of admitted forgery is a vast one we have shown in *Crimes of Christianity*, but that it includes the entire Christian literature of the first twelve centuries, we fancy, credits the monks with too much industry. Mr. Johnson argues that the writers ascribed to the fifth century have the same style, the same thoughts as those who are admitted to have written in the fourteenth. This absence of discrepancy and development he thinks conclusive, but it may be accounted for by an interregnum of dark ages, followed by a revival. We cannot see how Mr. Johnson bridges the gulf from the Cæsars to the Crusades without Christianity, and we feel we must still turn to our Gibbon as, on the whole, the safest guide amid the gloom.

The crux of the question raised by *The Rise of Christendom* seems to lie in this. Can it be proved that the traditions of the Mosque are earlier forms of the Jewish and Christian ones? That is a point difficult to determine. The Moslem tradition of Isa, the prophet who was son of Miriam, daughter of Imram and sister of Harun, seems to confirm the priority of at least some portion of the Christian legend, and possibly its confusion with that of Miriam, sister of Moses. To whatever conclusion the student may come, Mr. Johnson has certainly shown that there is a vast territory to be yet carefully explored, and that every item of alleged early Christian history must be examined with the utmost caution.

The *Essays of Michael de Montaigne*, Englished by John Florio, is to be the first of a series of Tudor Translations, to be published by D. Nutt. Florio's Montaigne is one of the few books known with certainty to have been used by Shakespeare, his copy being one of the most valued possessions of the British Museum.

A new translation of the "Attis" of Catullus will be issued by the same publisher with a dissertation on the myth of Attis, and the origin of tree worship by Grant Allen. Mr. J. G. Fraser, in his *Golden Bough*, goes pretty fully into this. Attis was like Osiris, Dionysos, and Adonis, and Christ, one of the nature gods who died and rose again at spring time. Possibly they all represented the vegetative and reproductive power of nature.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

President, G. W. FOOTE.

PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTS.

SECULARISM teaches that conduct should be based on reason and knowledge. It knows nothing of divine guidance or interference; it excludes supernatural hopes and fears; it regards happiness as man's proper aim, and utility as his moral guide.

Secularism affirms that Progress is only possible through Liberty, which is at once a right and a duty; and therefore seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action and speech.

Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitious and by experience as mischievous, and assails it as the historic enemy of progress.

Secularism accordingly seeks to dispel superstition; to spread education; to disestablish religion; to rationalise morality; to promote peace; to dignify labor; to extend material well-being; and to realise the self-government of the people.

MEMBERSHIP.

Any person is eligible as a member on signing the following declaration:—

"I desire to join the National Secular Society, and I pledge myself, if admitted as a member, to co-operate in promoting its objects."

Name

Address

Occupation

Active or Passive

Dated this.....day of.....18

This Declaration should be transmitted to the Secretary with a subscription; and, on admission of the member, a certificate will be issued by the Executive.

The minimum subscription for individual members is one shilling per year; all beyond that amount is optional, every member being left to fix his subscription according to his means and interest in the cause.

Members are classed as active or passive. Passive members are those who cannot allow their names to be published. Active members are those who do not object to the publication of their names, and are ready to co-operate openly in the Society's work.

Fill up the above form and forward it, with subscription (as much, or as little, as you think just to yourself and the cause), to Mr. Robert Forder, sec., 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.; or to a local Branch Secretary.

PROFANE JOKES.

A colored preacher in Alabama put his foot on alleged bribery at elections and crushed it. "Dis ting," he said, "ob getting one hundred dollars for a vote is all wrong; ten dollars is as much as it's worth."

A darkey, being brought before the magistrate, was asked, "Haven't you been in jail for stealing chickens once before?" "No, sah; no, indeed I hain't. Praise de Lawd for his infinite mussy, nobody haint cotched me yit. It seems as ef I wuz purtected by de higher powers."

At a prayer meeting in Georgia the pastor urged people to ask any questions they would like to have answered. This prompted an old darkey to get up and remark: "What I want to know is ef an oath taken on a Bible which hab de fast ten chapters ob Gennysis kissed often, is it bindin'?"

Inquiring Missionary (to East African native)—"And which do you like best, my dusky friend, the English or the Germans?" Native—"Oh, me likee Engleeshmans plenty much more." Missionary (rubbing his hands)—"Ah, I thought so." Native—"Him am de better flabor and heap more tender."

A little boy, who had been to Sunday-school for the first time with his elder brother, was very much interested with one line of a hymn which they sang, which ran thus: "Angels watch round my bed at night." When he got in bed that night with his brother he cried out, "Do angels watch round our bed at night, Charley?" Charley: "Oh, yes, all round." Little Boy: "No, they don't, oo fibber, tause my side's adainst the wall."

SUNDAY MEETINGS.

(Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday, and be marked "Lecture Notice," if not sent on post-card.) Secretaries may send in a month's list of lectures in advance.

LONDON.

- Ball's Pond Branch: 6.30, meeting at Minor Hall of Science.
Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.30, T. Crisfield, "The Difference between Hypnotism and Mesmerism"; 9.15, entertainment and dance.
Tuesday at 8, social gathering. Wednesday at 8, dramatic class. Thursday at 8, committee. Friday at 8, C. Cohen, "The Origin of Species."
Bethnal Green—Libra Hall, 78 Libra-road, Roman-road: 7.30, Dr. Alice Vickery, "The Population Question." Monday at 9, C. Cohen's science class (astronomy). Wednesday at 9, C. Cohen's class on "Spencer's Ethics."
Camberwell — 61 New Church-road, S.E.: 7.30, Mrs. Annie Besant, "Creation Stories, False and True."
Edmonton—North Middlesex Hall, Fore-street: 7, C. Cohen, "Ethics and Theology."
Finsbury Park Branch: 6.30, adjourned meeting at Minor Hall of Science.
Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.: 11.15, G. W. Foote, "The French Republic—1792 and 1892"; 6.30, musical selections; 7.15, G. W. Foote, "Ernest Renan: Writer and Thinker." Wednesday at 8, G. W. Foote, "The Philosophy of Atheism."
Hammersmith—Hammersmith Club, 1 The Grove: Thursday at 8, J. M. Robertson, "What has Christianity Done?"
Milton Hall, Hawley-crescent, Kentish Town-road, N.W.: 7.30, G. H. Martin, "Christian Infidelity."
Notting Hill Gate—"Duke of York," Kensington-place, Silver-street: 9, members' monthly meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

- Battersea Park-gates: 11.15, J. Rowney, "The Atonement."
Bethnal Green (opposite St. John's Church): 11.15, J. C. will lecture.
Camberwell—Station-road: 11.30, C. J. Hunt, "The Flight of the Shadows"
Finsbury Park (near the band-stand): 11.30, S. H. Alison, "Soul, Spirit, Ghost"; 3.30, C. J. Hunt, "Prayer."
Hammersmith-bridge (Middlesex side): 6.30, H. Courtney, "Blessed be ye poor."
Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "The Holy Ghost."
Kilburn—High-road (corner of Priory Park-road): 6, C. Durrant, "Freethought and Christianity."
Mile End Waste: 11.30, W. Heald, "Christianity and Secularism Compared."
Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, A. B. Moss, "Evolution and Christianity."
Victoria Park (near the fountain): 11.15 and 3.15, C. Cohen will lecture.

COUNTRY.

- Birmingham—Baskerville Hall, Crescent, Cambridge-street: Charles Watts, 11, "Monarchy or Republicanism"; 7, "The Reign of Jehovah": members' annual meeting at 3.
Bradford—Unity Lodge Rooms, 65 Sunbridge-road: O. Trumper, 3, "I receive not honor from men" (John v. 41); 6.30, "Workingmen: is Labor a Virtue?"
Bristol—Shepherd's Hall, Old Market-street: 7, J. Thatcher, "Infinity of Matter."
Chatham—Secular Hall, Queen's-road, New Brompton: Friday, Oct. 7, at 8, G. W. Foote, "After Death—What?" Sunday at 11, members' meeting and reading union; 2.45, children's Sunday-school; 7, concert and entertainment.
Derby—44 Howard-street, New Normanton: 7, members' quarterly meeting and social gathering.
Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: 12, discussion class, G. Faulkner, "Reasons why I Oppose Home Rule"; 6.30, James Wilson, F.T.S., "Science and Theosophy."
Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: J. M. Robertson, 11, "Right and Wrong"; 3, "What do Christians Believe?"; 7, "The Bible Fetish."
Manchester N.S.S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints': 6.30, social evening.
Newcastle-on-Tyne—Eldon Hall, 2 Clayton-street: 3, members' fortnightly meeting; 7, T. Pearson, "An Exposition of Anarchy."
Nottingham—Secular Hall, Beck-street: 7, James Hooper will lecture.
Plymouth—100 Union-street: 7, a meeting.
Portsmouth—Wellington Hall, Wellington-street, Southsea: 6, committee meeting; 7, Mr. Googe.
Rochdale—Secular Hall, Milkstone-road: 6.30, Sam Standing, "Archdeacon Wilson: is he a Real Clergyman?" (admission 3d.) Thursday at 8, "Was Jesus a God?" (free).
Sheffield — Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: 3, members' quarterly meeting; 5, tea; 7, a lecture or reading.
South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 7, J. Scott, "The Legal Eight Hours."
Sunderland—Bridge End Vaults, Bridge-street: 7, music and lecture.
Wolverhampton—Exchange Assembly Room: Mrs. Thornton Smith, 11, "The Influence of Christianity"; 3, "The Gospel of Freethought"; 7, "Has Man a Soul?"

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

- Blackburn—Fish Market-steps: 3, debate between Messrs. Hunter and Holmes on "Bible Contradictions."
Manchester—New Cross: 11.15, Sam Standing, "St. Stead's Civic Church."
Rochdale—Town Hall-square: Sam Standing, 3.15, "Secularising Rochdale—a most hopeful sign."

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, Clare Lodge, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—Oct. 9, Hammersmith Club; 16, Milton Hall; 23, Hall of Science; 30, Sheffield. Nov. 6, Hall of Science.

H. SNELL, 6 Monk-street, Woolwich.—Oct. 16, m., Camberwell, e., Lambeth; 23, Chatham; 30, e., Camberwell. Nov. 13, e., Camberwell; 20, e., Lambeth; 27, e., Libra Hall. Dec. 11, Camberwell; 18 Libra Hall.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Oct. 9, Westminster.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—Oct. 9, m., Camberwell; a., Finsbury Park; 16, a., Hammersmith; 23, m., Westminster; e., Lambeth; 30, m., Mile End Waste; a., Finsbury Park; e., Edmonton. Nov. 13, e., Edmonton; 20, Manchester; 27, Lambeth.

C. COHEN, 154 Cannon-street-road, Commercial-road, E.—Oct. 7, Battersea; 9, m. and a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton; 13, Walthamstow; 14, Battersea; 16, m., Mile End; e., Edmonton; 20, Walthamstow; 21, Battersea; 23, m., Hyde Park; a., Victoria Park; e., Libra Hall; 27, Walthamstow; 28, Battersea; 30, m., Camberwell; e., Libra Hall.

S. H. ALISON, 52 Vassall-road, Brixton, S.W.—Oct. 9, m., Finsbury Park; e., Lambeth; 16, m., Victoria Park; 23, m., Finsbury Park; 30, m., Bethnal Green.

STANLEY JONES, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.—Oct. 9, Hull; 16, Sheffield; 18, Cheltenham; 23, Bristol; 30, Cardiff. Nov. 3, Swansea; 6, Liverpool; 13, Manchester; 14, Pendlebury.

POSITIVISM.

"Reorganisation, without God or King, by the Systematic Worship of Humanity." Newcastle-on-Tyne, Church of Humanity, St. Mary's-place. News and addresses on Positivism every Sunday evening at seven. All seats free.

DON'T MISS THIS!

If you have **15s.** and you want to put it to the best possible use, send **15s.** for one of the undermentioned lots. If you don't require the goods yourself you can sell them for nearly double the amount.

Lot 1.—One Heavy Cloth (any color) and one Serge Dress Length for 15s.

Lot 2.—Serge, Worsted, or Tweed Suit Length for 15s.

Lot 3.—Black, Blue, Brown, or Oxford Grey Melton Overcoat Length for 15s.

Lot 4.—Three colored Cashmere Dress Lengths, all different, for 15s.

Lot 5.—Three Trousers Lengths, all different, for 15s.

Lot 6.—One Tweed Suit Length and one Cloth Dress Length for 15s.

I cannot send patterns of the above. They are dirt cheap. You cannot go wrong with them.

Patterns ready of New Winter Goods, post free. Don't forget my **GENTS' MACKINTOSHES**, They cannot be beaten.

J. W. GOTT, Bradford.

MY RESURRECTION

A MISSING CHAPTER FROM THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Discovered and Published by G. W. FOOTE.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

INGERSOLLISM

DEFENDED AGAINST ARCHDEACON FARRAR

By G. W. FOOTE.

Price Twopence. Price Twopence.

ROME or ATHEISM

The Great Alternative

By G. W. FOOTE.

Price Threepence. Price Threepence.

FREETHOUGHT WORKS.

FOOTE, G. W.

The Grand Old Book. A Reply to the Grand Old Man. An Exhaustive Answer to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture" ...	1 0
<i>Bound in cloth</i> ...	1 6
Is Socialism Sound? Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant ...	1 0
<i>Superior Edition, in cloth</i> ...	2 0
Christianity and Secularism. Four Night's Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann... ..	1 0
<i>Superior Edition, in cloth</i> ...	1 6
Darwin on God ...	0 6
<i>Superior Edition, in cloth</i> ...	1 0
Reminiscences of Charles Bradlaugh ...	0 6
Infidel Death-Beds. Second Edition, much enlarged	0 8
<i>Superior Edition, on superfine paper, bound in cloth</i>	1 3
Letters to the Clergy. <i>First Series</i> . 128pp. ...	1 0
Defence of Free Speech. Three Hours' Address to the Jury before Lord Coleridge. With a Special Preface and many Footnotes ...	0 4
Letters to Jesus Christ ...	0 4
Philosophy of Secularism ...	0 3
Atheism and Morality. Third edition ...	0 2
The Bible God ...	0 2
The Folly of Prayer ...	0 2
Christianity and Progress. Reply to Mr. Gladstone	0 2
Mrs Besant's Theosophy. A Candid Criticism. ...	0 2
Secularism and Theosophy. A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant ...	0 2
The New Cagliostro. An Open Letter to Madame Blavatsky ...	0 2
The Impossible Creed. An Open Letter to Bishop Magee on the Sermon on the Mount ...	0 2
Salvation Syrup; OR, LIGHT ON DARKEST ENGLAND. A Reply to General Booth. Second edition ...	0 2
What Was Christ? A Reply to J. S. Mill ...	0 2
The Shadow of the Sword. A Moral and Statistical Essay on War... ..	0 2
Royal Paupers. Showing what Royalty does for the People, and what the People do for Royalty ...	0 2
The Dying Atheist. A Story ...	0 1
Was Jesus Insane? A searching inquiry into the mental condition of the Prophet of Nazareth ...	0 1
Is the Bible Inspired? A Criticism on <i>Lux Mundi</i>	0 1
The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes's Converted Atheist A Lie in Five Chapters... ..	0 1
Bible Romances. New Edition. Revised and largely rewritten.—(1) The Creation Story, 2d.; (2) Eve and the Apple, 1d.; (3) Cain and Abel, 1d.; (4) Noah's Flood, 2d.; (5) The Tower of Babel, 1d.; (6) Lot's Wife, 1d.; (7) The Ten Plagues, 1d.; (8) The Wandering Jews, 1d.; (9) Balaam's Ass, 1d.; (10) God in a Box, 1d.; (11) Jonah and the Whale, 1d.; (12) Bible Animals, 1d.; (13) A Virgin Mother, 2d.; (14) The Resurrection, 2d.; (15) The Crucifixion, 1d.; (16) John's Nightmare, 1d.	1 0
Bible Heroes. <i>First Series</i> , in elegant wrapper ...	1 0
(1) Mr. Adam, (2) Captain Noah, (3) Father Abraham, (4) Juggling Jacob, (5) Master Joseph, (6) Joseph's Brethren, (7) Holy Moses I., (8) Moses II., (9) Parson Aaron, (10) General Joshua, (11) Jephthah and Co., (12) Professor Samson. <i>One Penny each</i>	1 0
Bible Heroes. <i>Second Series</i> , in elegant wrapper ...	1 0
(13) Prophet Samuel, (14) King Saul, (15) Saint David I., (16) Saint David II., (17) Sultan Solomon, (18) Poor Job, (19) Hairy Elijah, (20) Bald Elisha, (21) General Jehu, (22) Doctor Daniel, (23) The Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea), (24) St. Peter, (25) St. Paul. <i>One Penny each singly.</i>	2 6
<i>The Complete Work, bound in cloth</i> ...	2 6
NEWMAN, CHARLES ROBERT (Atheist Brother of Cardinal Newman.)	
Essays in Rationalism. With Preface by George Jacob Holyoake and Biographical Sketch by J. M. Wheeler	1 6
PAINÉ, THOMAS	
The Age of Reason. New edition, with Preface by G. W. Foote ...	1 0
Miscellaneous Theological Works... ..	1 0
<i>Complete Theological Works, bound in cloth</i> ...	2 6
Rights of Man. With a Political Biography by J. M. Wheeler. Paper covers ...	1 0
<i>Bound in cloth</i> ...	2 0
SHELLEY	
A Refutation of Deism. In a Dialogue. With an Introduction by G. W. Foote ...	0 4

'BIBLE STUDIES'

AN ESSAY ON

PHALLIC WORSHIP & OTHER CURIOUS RITES & CUSTOMS

By J. M. WHEELER.

Contents:—Phallic Worship Among the Jews—Circumcision—Moses at the Inn—The Brazen Serpent—Religion and Magic—Taboos—Blood Rites—Scapegoats—Trial by Ordeal—Bible Witchcraft—Saul's Spiritualist Séance—Sacrifices—Passover—The Evolution of Jahveh—Joshua and the Sun—Hebrew Prophets—Old Testament Marriage—Song of Solomon—Sacred Seven.

Price 2s. 6d. Superior paper, illustrated, and bound in cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

NOW READY.

COMIC SERMONS AND OTHER FANTASIAS

By G. W. FOOTE.

Contents:—A Sermon on Summer; A Mad Sermon; A Sermon on Sin; A Bishop in the Workhouse; A Christmas Sermon; Christmas Eve in Heaven; Bishop Trimmer's Sunday Diary; The Judge and the Devil; Satan and Michael; The First Christmas; Adam's Breeches; The Fall of Eve; Joshua at Jericho; A Baby God; Sermon on Judas Iscariot.

PRICE EIGHTPENCE.

Now Ready.

PAINE THE PIONEER

Now Ready.

AN ESSAY ON THE

Career and Writings of Thomas Paine

PRICE TWOPENCE.

By COL. R. G. INGERSOLL.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WAS CHRIST CRUCIFIED?

An Essay by AUSTIN BIERBOWER (Member of the Chicago Bar).

PRICE ONE PENNY.

LIST OF BOOKS

SOLD BY

W. H. REYNOLDS, PUBLISHER, NEW CROSS, LONDON, S.E.

And sent through the Post Only.

- The Strike of a Sex; or, Woman on Strike against the Male Sex for her "Magna Charter,"** the absolute ownership of her own person. One of the most advanced books ever published; intended to revolutionise public opinion on the relation of the sexes. Should be read by every person. Post free 8d.
- Theosophy and the Law of Population.** By Annie Besant. Post free 2d.
- Sexual Physiology for the Young; or, Science in Story.** By Dr. Foote. 25pp., with one hundred illustrations, bound in cloth. Should be read by every young person. Post free 2s. 3d.
- The Elements of Social Science.** The most complete work on sexual matters ever published. Should be read by every adult. Bound in cloth, 804 pages. Post free 3s. 3d.
- The Radical Remedy in Social Science; or, Borning Better Babies through Regulating Reproduction by Controlling Conception.** By Dr. Foote. Post free 1s. 1d.
- Over-Population; a Lecture delivered for the Sunday Lecture Society, under the title "The Law of Population: its Meaning and Menace."** By John M. Robertson. Post free 2½d.
- Plain Home-Talk,** by Edward B. Foote, M.D. (U.S.A.) embracing medical common sense. 909pp., with 200 illustrations. *Contents:* The Cause, Prevention and Cure of Disease—The Food we Eat—The Liquids we Drink—The Atmosphere we Live in—The Clothes we Wear—Bad Habits of Children and Youth—Bad Habits of Manhood and Womanhood—Sexual Starvation—How to have Healthy Babies—Private Words to Men—History of Marriage, etc. The book is carefully and thoughtfully written in plain language, easily understood, and with the object of making its readers better parents and better citizens through the knowledge obtained of themselves and their duty to others. No parent should be without this book. Useful for every-day reference. Post free 6s.
- Dr. Foote's Handbook of Health,** comprising information of the utmost importance to all who wish to enjoy life. 128pp., post free 1s. 1d.
- The Wife's Handbook: How a Woman should order herself during Pregnancy, in the Lying-in Room, and after Delivery; with Hints on the Management of the Baby, and on other matters of importance necessary to be known by Married Women.** By Dr. H. A. Allbutt. Post free, 8d.
- Early Marriage and Late Parentage.** The only solution of the Social Problem. By Oxoniensis. Post free 2½d.
- The Over-Growth of Population, and its Remedy.** An address to men only, delivered at Lambeth Baths on Tuesday, January 15, 1889, by William Lunt Carpenter, B.A., B.Sc. Post free 2d.
- The Political Status of Women.** By A. Besant. Post free 3d.
- The Life and Writings of T. R. Malthus,** by C. R. Drysdale, M.D. 120 pages, with portrait of Malthus. Should be read by every student of social problems. Post free 1s. 1d.
- Poverty, its Cause and Cure.** By M. G. H. Post free 2d. A splendid propagandist tract. Should be widely distributed by Malthusians. Post free 2d.
- Married Life—Comfort or Misery?** A dialogue and splendid propagandist tract. Should be widely distributed by Malthusians. Post free 2d.
- Wedded Life—As it is, and as it should be.** By Mary Sowden. Post free 2d.
- Early Marriages and Limited Families.** By Dr. Alice Vickery. Post free 2d.
- What do we Women Want?** By Jane Hume Clapperton. Post free 2d.
- The Malthusian Movement—What is it?** By Geo. Standing. Post free 2d.
- Mr. Justice Windeyer on the Population Question.** Post free 2d.
- The Right to Die.** By T. O. Bonser, M.A. Post free 2d.
- Labor's Prayer.** By O. Bradlaugh, M.P. Post free 1½d.
- The Parson's Idol.** Twenty copies, post free, 2d.
- Col. Ingersoll's Reply to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's Defence of the Christian Religion.** Should be read by every person. 32 pages, post free 2d.
- Modern Socialism.** A thorough exposition of Scientific Socialism, by Annie Besant. Post free 7d.
- THE MALTHUSIAN.** A Crusade against Poverty. The monthly organ of the Malthusian League. Post free 1½d.
- Malthusian Leaflets—**A packet will be sent, on receipt of postage, to any person who will undertake to distribute them. A complete List of Malthusian Appliances, with prices, sent on receipt of a stamped directed envelope.
- To those willing to assist our propaganda I shall be pleased to send eighty copies of either of the pamphlets marked (*), or assorted, post free on receipt of 2s.

ERNEST RENAN: WRITER AND FREETHINKER

A Special Lecture by G. W. FOOTE,
 AT THE LONDON HALL OF SCIENCE, 142 OLD STREET, E.C.,
 On Sunday, October 9, at 7 p.m. Seats 1s., 6d., and 3d.

Now Ready.]

ROYAL PAUPERS

[Now Ready.

By G. W. FOOTE:

Fourth Edition. Completing Eighteen Thousand.

32pp. Price Twopence.

NATIONAL SECULAR HALL SOCIETY (LIMITED).

(Incorporated under 39 and 40 Vic., cap. 45, Act 1876.)

Chairman:

G. W. FOOTE, 14 Clerkenwell-green,
 London, E.C.

Directors:

GEORGE ANDERSON, 35a Great George-street,
 Westminster, S.W.

W. COOPER, 112 Canonbury-road, N.

R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

G. J. HOLYOAKE, Eastern Lodge, Brighton.

W. H. REYNOLDS, Camplin House, New
 Cross, S.E.

R. O. SMITH, 81 Ridge-road, Hornsey, N.

T. P. SMITH, 275 City-road, E.C.

G. STANDING, 7 and 9 Finsbury-street, E.C.

Registered Office:

HALL OF SCIENCE, 142 Old-street, London, E.C.

The Shares are £1 each, payable as follows:—2s. 6d. on application. 2s. 6d. on allotment, and in subsequent calls of 2s. 6d. as may be found necessary, with two months' notice for each call.

GENERAL OBJECT.

The Society, according to its Rules, has full powers for the most extensive operations that may be possible in the future for the erection and maintenance of Secular Halls in London and in the Provinces.

One of the Society's Rules secures that no member shall be eligible as a Director unless he is a member of the National Secular Society.

IMMEDIATE OBJECT.

The purchase of the Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, London, E.C., and the conversion of the same into a first-class Secular Hall and Institute.

Write to the Secretary for Application Forms.

ESTABLISHED 1840.

A. CAMPBELL & CO., MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MAKERS, 77 JAMAICA STREET, GLASGOW.

Importers of every Description of Musical Instruments, Fittings, Strings, etc. All Kinds of Musical Instruments Tuned and Repaired. Pianos, Harmoniums, American Organs, Organettes, Flute and Brass Bands Supplied with Full Sets of Instruments. Music for Organette, 1d. per Foot. Hundreds of Tunes to Select from. Agents for Messrs Kolbier and Son, Edinburgh. JAMES P. BROWN, Proprietor.

OUR SPECIALITIES.

THOUSANDS OF TESTIMONIALS. GENTS' IRISH CAMBRIC HANDKERCHIEFS, 3s. 6d. per dozen; Ladies, 2s. 8d.; Hemstitched Lawn, 3s. per dozen. Carriage paid. Money returned if not approved. Table and Bed Linen at Wholesale Prices.

GORDON & CO., Agents for Irish Goods,
 21 BLANSHARD STREET, MANCHESTER.

MARIE'S MARVELLOUS MOLIMENIK,

My Monthly Medicine for Ladies. A reliable and powerful remedy which infallibly cures all irregularities, and removes all obstructions however obstinate. In Bottles, 3s., 4s. 6d., and 10s. 6d. each, post free. Success is quicker, easier, and better assured, if, when taking the Molimenik, the blood is also purified by a suitable aperient.

MARIE'S MAGICAL MOLECULES. A Special Female Purifying Pill, harmonizing with and strengthening the action of the Molimenik. In Boxes, 1s. 3d. and 3s. each, post free.

Both these remedies are carefully compounded of the purest Medicines from the advice and prescription of a regular Family Doctor of many years' practice. Taken according to the instructions they are harmless, and correct with certainty every stage of the natural process. Fly to the Molimenik and Molecules at the earliest moment; delay always adds to the difficulty; no case should be allowed to become urgent. TESTIMONIAL.—An eminent Physician, and author of valuable medical works, writes: "I know your Medicine to be of efficacy and calculated to do all you require of it."

T. F. KINGFISHER, LEEDS.
 OUGHT WOMEN TO BE PUNISHED FOR HAVING TOO MANY CHILDREN? Fourpence, post free. G. W. F. Kingfisher Leeds.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN DOCTOR.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. I. For Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

It contains Articles on: Management of Infancy; Health; Longevity; The Teeth; Brown Bread; Bread Making; Food; Vegetarianism; Tobacco; The Drink Question; Fruit; Fresh Air; Exercise; Bathing; Sight; Holidays; etc. Also the cause and cure of Disease; Constipation; Bilioussness; Eczema; Black-heads and Pimples; Nervousness; Coughs and Colds; Chest Complaints; Deafness; Thread Worms; Long Worms; Tape Worms; The Itch; etc.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. II. Of the Author, for Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

Containing Articles on: The Healing Power of Nature; Electricity in Disease; Apparent Health; Vegetarian Experiments; The Pig as Human Food; Popular Fallacies about Flesh; The Beef Tea Delusion; Salt; Saline Starvation; Tea Drinking; The Hair and its Management; Sleep and Sleeplessness; Want of Energy, etc.; Health Hints for Workers, for Shop Assistants, and for Servants; Advice for the Ibin; for the Stout; and on the Proper Treatment of Simple Fever, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough, Ringworm, Hypochondria, Bloodlessness, Diarrhoea, Ulcerated Legs, Tumours, etc.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. III. Post free from Author, for Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

It contains articles on: Health and Wealth; No More Death; Youth; The Necessity for Pure Air, and How to Get it; The Management of Young Children; Hunger and Appetite; Effects of Fasting; Perfect Foods; Green Foods; Stoppers; Unsuspected Domestic Poisons; Thirst; Perspiration; Sea Bathing; etc. HOW—to Eat Properly, to Eat Fruit, to Judge Wholesome Bread, to Breathe Properly, to Grow Tall, to Keep Warm, I Live, to Live 100 Years, to Improve the Memory, and to become Beautiful and Attractive. On the Cause and Cure of the following Diseases: Stomach Troubles, Flatulence, Sleepiness, Varicose Veins, Boils and Carbuncles, Scabaceous Tumors or Wens, Hay Fever, Winter Cough, Chills, and on the Diseases Produced by taking Mercury.

"Hygienic Medicine."—For Postal Order for 1s. 1d.

An Eye Opener to Drug Takers.

"Rheumatism."—Its Cause and Cure. Post Free for 7d.

"Diet and Digestion."—Post Free for 7 stamps.

"Consumption."—Its Natural Cure. Post Free 7d.

"Three Pamphlets to Young Men."—13 stamps.

All the above can be got from

Dr. T. R. ALLINSON, 4 SPANISH PLACE,
 MANCHESTER SQUARE, LONDON, W.

Please mention this paper.]

STANTON, the People's Dentist, 335 Strand (opposite Somerset House).—TEETH on VULCANITE, 2s. 6d. each, upper or lower set, £1. Best quality. 4s. each, upper or lower, £2, completed in four hours when required, repairing or alterations in two hours. If you pay more than the above they are fancy charges. Teeth on platinum 7s. 6d. each on 18c. gold 15s. stamping 2s. 6d., extraction 1s., painless by gas, 5s.

W. J. Rendell's "WIFE'S FRIEND."

Recommended by Mrs. Beant in "Law of Population," page 32, and Dr. Allbutt in "Wife's Handbook," page 51. Made solely by J. PILLIPS, 15 Chadwell-street, Clerkenwell: 2s. doz., post free (reduction in larger quantities). For particulars send stamped envelope. Higginson's Syringe, with Vertical and Reverse Current, 2s. 6d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. Dr. Palmer's Powder, 1s. 2d. Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. Dr. Allbutt's Quinine Powders, 8s. doz. All prices post free.

W. J. Rendell
 15 Chadwell Street, Clerkenwell, E.C.
 Near the "Angel."

RUBBER STAMPS.

Your Monogram to mark Linen or Paper; two letters 1s.; three letters, 1s. 6d.; any Name, 1s. 6d. Box, Ink and Ink included. All kinds of Stamps. Patterns free. Carriage 2d. extra. F. N. IRETON and CO., 92 Gracechurch Street, London. Agents wanted.

A WIDOW (FREETHINKER)

Is desirous of putting her LITTLE BOY (aged two years) OUT TO NURSE with a Freethinking Family; liberal terms; Manchester or its suburbs preferred. Apply by letter, S. J. B., "Freethinker" Office.

For Indigestion, Liver Complaint & General Debility

MOORE'S DIGESTIVE PILLS

ARE AN INVALUABLE MEDICINE.

The chief ingredient of which is one of the greatest aids to Digestion ever discovered; they will be found to have a marvellous effect if taken as directed and proper attention is paid to diet.

They positively assist the digestion of food, stimulate the liver, and act as an invigorating tonic upon the whole system.

The Proprietor honestly recommends the above remedy to all sufferers. Prepared only by

WILFRID HILL,
 The Pharmacy, Coleshill, Warwickshire.
 Price 1s and 2s per box; post free.

WRINGERS AND MANGLES

From 30s. Superior Wringers from 15s. 6d. All rollers warranted. Bassinets, with hood complete, from 21s. Mail Carriage from 9s. 6d. Repairs by experienced workmen. Cheals, 140 Old Kent-rd., London.

Dutch and Other Flowering Bulbs

AT Very Low Prices. Before purchasing for the coming season, send for a copy of my catalogue, which will be sent post free. B. L. Coleman, Seed and Bulb Merchant, Sandwich.

THE FAMILY LIMIT

1s. 6d. per doz., post free.

For further Particulars send stamped directed envelope to

A. MOSS, 36 Upper Park Street,
 BILINGTON, LONDON, N.

OUR SPECIAL ILLUSTRATED LIST

Should be in the hands of every Married Couple in the kingdom, wishing to regulate the number of their family according to their means, as it contains full particulars of all Preventive Requisites recommended by Dr. H. A. ALLBUTT and others; and valuable information on matters of importance necessary to be known by Married Women.

A copy will be sent, under cover, on receipt of stamp, to any part of the United Kingdom, and to foreign parts on receipt of letter postage.

Address—E. LAMBERT & SON, M.M.L.,
 (DOMESTIC & HYGIENIC DEPT.)

60 Queen's Road, Dalston, London, N.E.

HOME RULE AND FEDERATION, advocating Federation as the remedy for International Anarchy, and for Wars and Huge Armaments 34pp., price 2d., by post 3d. London: E. Truelove, 205 High Holborn.

"A HOME FROM HOME" (for Freethinkers).—Mrs Harry Long, No. 3, Vane-road, Blackpool. Apartments, near central station, promenade, and sea. Readers, please show this to your friends.

TWO FREETHINKERS, Ladies and Gentlemen, requiring superior Cut Garments at moderate prices. First-class style and Fit Guaranteed.—H. HAMPTON, Artists Tailor, 14 Great Castle street, W. Three doors from Regent Street. [Patronised by leading Freethinkers.]

TWO MARRIED PEOPLE.—An enlarged Illustrated List of Kalthusian Appliances will be forwarded by return of post on receipt of 2d. in stamps.—Address, Davys, Chemist, 101 Park-lane, Leeds.

Printed and Published by G. W. FOOTE, at
 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.